

JOHN DEWEY AND MARTIN HEIDEGGER: A STUDY  
OF A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

BY

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JOHN DEWEY AND MARTIN HEIDEGGER: A STUDY  
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By

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The intent of this study is to show that Dewey and Heidegger shared a common understanding of the human problems engendered by traditional ways of thinking. Both philosophers, from different backgrounds and using different language, insisted they were not offering a new "view of reality," but rather a different way of thinking about our on-going relationship with reality. When this distinction is understood and taken seriously, we find it suggests significant changes in western thought.

Both Dewey and Heidegger identified traditional thinking as a way of thinking which was based on a radical separation between knower and known and which took as its ultimate aim the construction of an accurate picture of reality. In contrast, both urged a way of thinking rooted in the temporal process of experience and capable of reflecting

upon the human responsibility in the construction and future reconstruction of true ideas.

The work of Dewey and Heidegger suggests a different way of thinking about thinking and knowledge; it suggests a major change, not necessarily in the content of ideas, but in the way human beings relate to ideas. The study discusses some of the epistemological and social implications of this change.

Finally, the educational implications of this different way of thinking are explored. The implicit commitment of American education to democracy necessitates an analysis of its meaning. The analysis suggests that the traditional model of thinking itself interferes with a clear conception of democracy. A conception of democracy as "a continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas" is developed.

This conception implies radical changes in educational practice, for example, (1) restructuring of class time to allow for questioning and listening; (2) a reversal in priorities between testing and active participation; (3) a change in teacher preparation towards educating to perform the function of "guide," rather than "authoritative source"; and (4) a restructuring of the institution as a workplace so that teachers have the functional power to meet their responsibilities, rather than merely the "power" accorded them by their "status" in the organizational hierarchy.



## INTRODUCTION

The public is demanding that education be "accountable." To be "accountable" means to be "responsible," i.e., capable of responding, answering, or explaining, "capable of rational thought or action."<sup>1</sup> Generating hard data to support the claim that education is fulfilling its aims, in the absence of a clear sense of what those aims are, is hardly meeting this responsibility.

"Accountability" has become a fashionable term, a "code word" for the statistics which give credence to the idea that the educational institution is doing what it says it is going to do. But who is making the decisions concerning what the educational institution says it is going to do? Who is accepting the responsibility for the determination of educational aims? The operative assumption is that "everybody" knows what the aims of education are. But is this the case?

If one were to poll "everybody" concerning their concept of the aims of education, would the same answer emerge? The most typical response might be "the aim of education is learning," but the slightest effort to draw out a more specific meaning would generate myriad responses from "learning how to read" to "learning how to be a good citizen" to "learning in order to get a good job." I suggest that the results would be the same if the sample polled were reduced from "everybody" to educators.

At a time when thoughtful communication is most required, educational philosophy, which could be instrumental in the clarification, formulation, and communication of educational aims, is undervalued. Educational philosophers are seen as too "theoretical" to be of help in a time of "practical" urgency; they face program cut-backs and decreasing influence. But the problem of a lack of clear educational aims remains; and the frantic generation of data does not change this chaotic state of affairs.

It may appear that the solution to the problem is simple, i.e., the educational community should charge its philosophers with the task of clearly determining its ultimate aim. Once this aim were determined the educational establishment could then decide without equivocation what students needed to learn, and researchers could develop appropriate techniques for measuring the success or failure of the teaching effort. However, such a program would require a degree of authoritarian control that the majority of Americans would find repugnant.

We are facing a dilemma. Education must have a clear aim in order to meet responsibly the public's demand for accountability. But actually changing the schools to efficiently meet the defined goal would defy this country's long-standing belief in freedom of thought. When looked at in this way the choice before us is between authoritarian control and continued chaos.

One purpose of the present work is to show that the dilemma referred to above rests on certain assumptions about the process of thinking and the nature of aims. These assumptions are part of a

particular model of thinking. For example, the model assumes that thinking is something that individuals do with the sole purpose of generating independently "true ideas." Thus, a suggested effort to think about and clarify educational aims is taken as expressing the need for an ultimately "true idea" which should henceforth determine the educational endeavor.

John Dewey and Martin Heidegger are two thinkers of the current century who offered a different, and I will argue more useful model of thinking. Both suggested that the traditional model leads to dilemmas which are unresolvable as long as we accept unquestioningly the traditional way of thinking. They offered an alternative model which could prove useful in the resolution of the dilemma in education.

Few scholars have explored the similarities between the thought of Dewey and the thought of Heidegger. Approximately ten years ago Leroy Troutner and Victor Kestenbaum engaged in a brief exchange concerning Troutner's proposed "synthesis" of the "experimentalism" of Dewey and the "existential-phenomenology" of Heidegger.<sup>2</sup> In 1976, Richard Rorty's article "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey"<sup>3</sup> appeared. This article is the focus of Chapter II in this work. Although I am highly critical of the interpretation of Heidegger which Rorty expresses in this article, his later and broader work, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature<sup>4</sup> deserves serious study by the scholar interested in the radical nature of what I term the "paradigm shift" (the change in models of thinking) urged by both Dewey and Heidegger. Finally, in 1978, the article considered in Chapter III of this work appeared--Michael Zimmerman's "Dewey, Heidegger, and the Quest for Certainty."<sup>5</sup>

For the most part these articles (Rorty's book is the notable exception to the following generalizations) have been efforts to analyze and evaluate selected similarities and differences between Dewey's ideas and Heidegger's. For example, Zimmerman concludes that Heidegger's perspective on science is more valuable than Dewey's; Rorty, in his article, decides that Dewey's practical, "end of philosophy" approach is more realistic than Heidegger's perceived "other-worldliness"; Troutner suggests a "partnership" between Dewey's "organism-environment transaction perspective" and Heidegger's "existence" perspective. These efforts have taken the respective work of Dewey and Heidegger as two bodies of ideas, i.e., finished products, and have sought to compare and contrast the two "products" in their particularities. This is not the approach taken in the present work.<sup>6</sup>

Both Dewey and Heidegger urged a changing of our habitual ways of thinking. Both sought to account for our habits of thought historically and in terms of future consequences. In other words, both placed thinking within a temporal context and argued that traditional thought sought an a-temporal ground for its activities. This work is a study of the significance of the shift (from a-temporal ground to temporal context).

Chapter I explores the reasons that so few scholars have noted the similarities between these two thinkers and outlines the general nature of the similarities. The next two chapters examine the work of two scholars who have considered the similarities outlined in Chapter I. The focal point of Chapter II is Rorty's article which concludes with a preference for Dewey's work over Heidegger's, on the ground of

Heidegger's perceived "other-worldliness." It is argued that the latter is a misperception which is based on a failure to understand Heidegger's use of the term "Being." Chapter III challenges the basis for Zimmerman's concluding preference for Heidegger's work over Dewey's; Zimmerman suggests that Dewey's advocacy of "science" betrays a commitment to the traditional thought which Heidegger is seeking to overcome. The chapter explores Dewey's conception of scientific method and its uses. Heidegger's use of the term "Being" and Dewey's advocacy of "science" are taken as the major stumbling blocks to a general philosophical understanding and consequent exploration of the implications of their central vision. Thus, by demonstrating that these major "ideas"<sup>7</sup> of Heidegger and Dewey are not incompatible when examined closely, the pathway is cleared for a serious consideration of the implications of a way of thinking grounded in a temporal context rather than a way of thinking which seeks an a-temporal, or unchanging ground.

Chapter IV is concerned with clarifying this change in the model or pattern. Both the traditional and the temporal epistemological models are described. Then some of the changes which would occur if we were to think in this different way are explored. For example, what is the significance of understanding the knower as a participant in the knowing process, rather than as a spectator of "what is to be known"? And how does "what is to be known" change when there is no assumption of some unchanging structure "out there"? The chapter concludes that only concrete meanings actualized within experience can adequately function as the aim of knowing.

Finally, in Chapter V we return to our primary concern, i.e., education. How can this different way of thinking help educators resolve the dilemma between authoritarian control and chaos? The dilemma was induced by a particular view of ideas and their relationship to human experience. Dewey's and Heidegger's thought changes that relationship. Dewey calls that changed relationship "democracy"; Heidegger calls it "dwelling."

The implicit commitment of American education to educating students in and for a democratic society obligates educators to give serious thought to the implications of this different way of thinking. This last chapter points out some of those implications. It is hoped that this entire study will be taken, in Heidegger's words, "as directions for the road of independent reflection on the matter pointed out which each must travel for himself."<sup>8</sup>

Notes

<sup>1</sup>American College Dictionary, rev. ed. (1953), s.v. "accountable," and "responsible."

<sup>2</sup>See Leroy F. Troutner, "The Confrontation Between Experimentalism and Existentialism, From Dewey Through Heidegger and Beyond," Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society 24 (1968): 186-194; Leroy F. Troutner, "The Dewey-Heidegger Comparison Revisited: A Perspectival Partnership for Education," Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society 28 (1972): 28-44; Victor Kestenbaum, "Phenomenology and Dewey's Empiricism: A Response to Leroy Troutner," Educational Theory 22 (Winter 1972): 99-108; and Leroy F. Troutner, "The Dewey-Heidegger Comparison Revisited: A Reply and Clarification," Educational Theory 22 (Spring 1972): 212-220.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey," The Review of Metaphysics 30 (December 1976): 280-305.

<sup>4</sup>Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 1979.

<sup>5</sup>Michael Zimmerman, "Dewey, Heidegger, and the Quest for Certainty," The Southwest Journal of Philosophy 9 (Spring 1978): 87-95.

<sup>6</sup>See the beginning of Chapter IV for a fuller explanation of the reasons for rejecting this approach.

<sup>7</sup>"Ideas" is put in quotation marks because, for Heidegger, the term "Being" does not function as an "idea." See Chapter II for a further explication of this point.

<sup>8</sup>Martin Heidegger, "Preface," to Martin Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, 2nd ed., William J. Richardson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. viii.

## CHAPTER I

### DEWEY AND HEIDEGGER: AN A-TYPICAL COMPARISON

#### Why Comparison Is A-typical

John Dewey (1859-1952) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) are both "well-known" philosophers of the current century. "Well-known" is in quotation marks here because the words are meant to refer only to the fame of the two philosophers, and not to how "well" or how deeply their thought has been understood. Indeed, virtually all philosophers as well as many nonphilosophers would recognize their names. Both were prolific writers and had long teaching careers. The teaching stays Dewey spent in China, Japan, and Russia spread his influence beyond the American borders. While Heidegger himself traveled little, his students came from many countries to study with him in Germany, subsequently returning to their own countries to spread his influence. Thus, there seems to be little need for elaborate biographies.

#### Different Backgrounds

Of Dewey's influence on American thought, Rodman Webb writes, pragmatism is America's only native philosophy, and John Dewey's seminal works stand at its center. His influence on the course of twentieth-century American intellectual thought has been dramatic and profound. The modern development of sociology, law, political and social theory, religion, and of course education has been nurtured and enriched by Dewey's contribution.<sup>1</sup>

Such tributes are frequent and well-earned. Dewey's long, public career, spanning half a century from his early days at the University of Michigan,



through the decade at the turn of the century at the University of Chicago and his long tenure of thirty-four years at Columbia University, caused the American historian, Morris Cohen, to write,

so faithfully did Dewey live up to his philosophical creed that he became the guide, the mentor, and the conscience of the American people: it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that for a generation no major issue was clarified until Dewey had spoken.<sup>2</sup>

Dewey was a productive scholar, his writing "comprising some forty books and over seven hundred articles."<sup>3</sup> Also, he was actively involved in the many social and political issues which he considered important. He organized teacher unions and attempted to organize a third political party; he marched for women's suffrage, and helped to found the New School for Social Research and the American Civil Liberties Union; he served as chairman of the Commission of Inquiry which investigated the charges against Trotsky, and vociferously defended academic freedom wherever he saw it under attack. The foregoing names only a few of his many activities.

Dewey saw the need for change in the structure of our public institutions--change which would lead to a more democratic society as he envisioned it. He deemed it part of his responsibility as a thinker to speak out and work for such change. Dewey frequently has been referred to as an "optimist." If this characterization is taken to mean that he naively believed that "everything will be okay," there is little evidence that this is true. However, optimism can also be taken as a personal attitude, perhaps best described as cheerful courage. It can be seen as an attitude that one assumes towards the many problems of thought and action regardless of one's judgment of outcome. Taken with

this latter meaning, Dewey certainly was an "optimist," and he took the public arena as a friendly place within which to do "open battle."

Heidegger's route to "fame" was very different from Dewey's. Hannah Arendt, a personal friend of Heidegger's as well as a fellow scholar, writes of Heidegger's fame:

Heidegger's "fame" predates by about eight years the publication of *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) in 1927; indeed it is open to question whether the unusual success of this book--not just the immediate impact it had inside and outside the academic world but also its extraordinarily lasting influence, with which few of the century's publications can compare--would have been possible if it had not been preceded by the teacher's reputation among the students, in whose opinion, at any rate, the book's success merely confirmed what they had known for many years.<sup>4</sup>

Heidegger's fame and influence came about in a manner different from Dewey's. Heidegger was not the beloved public figure, as was Dewey. Indeed, his one brief excursion into the public, political spotlight seriously damaged his reputation, and likely retarded his influence here in America. The circumstances surrounding Heidegger's acceptance of the rectorate of Freiburg University under the Nazi regime, from April 1933 to February 1934, are only now beginning to come to light. Heidegger himself maintained silence on the subject from the time of his resignation until 1966 when he granted an interview to the editors of Der Spiegel. He granted the interview, however, only with the strict agreement that it not be published until after his death.<sup>5</sup>

Heidegger's avoidance of the public arena was deliberate on his part. He consistently resisted the advances of biographers. The first year of his teaching career at Marburg (1922), he built his now famous cottage in Todtnauberg in the southern Black Forest, which he considered

his "work world." The year he resigned the rectorate of Freiburg University (1934) he wrote a very brief statement entitled "Why Do I Stay in the Provinces," in which he said,

in the public world one can be made a "celebrity" overnight by the newspaper and journals. That always remains the surest way to have one's ownmost intentions get misinterpreted and quickly and thoroughly forgotten.<sup>6</sup>

In the Der Spiegel (1966) interview when Heidegger was asked why he had maintained silence for so long throughout the controversy surrounding his political error of the '30s, he said, "it is neither pride nor stubbornness, but rather sheer care for my work."<sup>7</sup>

Heidegger tended to view the public arena, not as a friendly place as Dewey had, but as a danger and a distraction. The danger Heidegger perceived was not a personal danger, a threat to his own existence (although in this period of German history this would certainly have been a reasonable perception). Rather, Heidegger feared that a sensation-seeking public would fix its interest on his personal life, thereby being distracted from the more difficult and urgent challenges of his writing and teaching.

Heidegger's fame, as Arendt pointed out, came about through "the teacher's reputation among the students"; it spread rapidly by word-of-mouth. Arendt described the excitement among students on the European continent as word of Heidegger's unique style of teaching spread. "We were so accustomed to the old opposition of reason versus passion, spirit versus life, that the idea of passionate thinking, in which thinking and aliveness become one, takes us somewhat aback."<sup>8</sup>

Walter Biemal, who describes his experience in Heidegger's seminars as electrifying, writes,

even with beginners, he was able to coax them into thinking, not just learning various views or reproducing what they had read, but entering into the movement of thinking. It seemed as if by some miracle the Socratic practice of address and rejoinder had come to life again.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the profound influence Heidegger had on the many students who flocked to his seminars throughout his approximately fifty-year teaching career laid the groundwork which was only deepened and extended by his prolific writing career. While many in this country would identify Heidegger only with his most famous work, Being and Time, which did not appear in English translation until 1962, an estimate of the number of his works would include approximately forty-five books and over seventy articles. (The imprecision is due to the fact that Heidegger wrote several pieces that are variously published as short books or long essays.)

### Separate Categories

Dewey and Heidegger obviously brought different backgrounds to their philosophical work. They made different choices concerning how best to live out their philosophical commitments. As with most thinkers who achieve a degree of fame, popular beliefs concerning what they were attempting to do and into what philosophical "schools of thought" their thinking should be placed are readily available. It is suggested here that the biographical differences between Dewey and Heidegger have had a more determinate influence on popular beliefs about them than have examined differences in philosophical vision. Scholars who have studied the respective thought of Dewey and Heidegger tend to study one or the

other, but not both. One of the primary reasons for this is that Dewey and Heidegger have been placed in different "cultural categories."

The term "cultural categories" is used to refer to the basically dualistic division of western culture. The various "schools of thought" from the many intellectual disciplines of western culture are typically seen as "belonging" in one cultural category or the other, as are many abstract concepts. (For simplicity, I will refer to Category I and Category II--see summary chart below). For example, within philosophy, Pragmatism and Linguistic Analysis fall into Category I and are seen as closely related to each other and to Behaviorism in psychology and Realism in literature; Category II includes Existentialism, Phenomenology, Humanistic Psychology, and Romanticism. This same categorical division is reflected in such concepts as objective v. subjective, instrumental v. expressive, public v. private, society v. nature, science v. religion, and rational v. irrational--in other words, the "nest of dualisms" to which Dewey disapprovingly refers.

#### Summary Chart

##### Category I Examples

##### Category II Examples

Pragmatism	←————→	Existentialism
Linguistic Analysis	←————→	Phenomenology
Behaviorism	←————→	Humanistic Psychology
Realism	←————→	Romanticism
objective	←————→	subjective
instrumental	←————→	expressive
public	←————→	private
society	←————→	nature
science	←————→	religion
rational	←————→	irrational

If one examines the concepts listed above under Category I Examples, one will find that many of the terms are associated with Dewey's thinking. Conversely, many of the Category II Examples are associated with Heidegger's work. This gross, dualistic categorization has limited scholarly concern for the similarities between Dewey and Heidegger. The categorization divides philosophers themselves by their areas of concern. For example, a philosopher who perceives the most interesting questions in the realm of the subjective tends to view Dewey's work as not pertinent to his or her reflective concern. On the other hand, a philosopher committed to an objective, scientific approach tends to see Heidegger's work as not worth the effort required to penetrate Heideggarian language. The fact that both Dewey and Heidegger agreed most vehemently and consistently on the point that the categorical split itself reflects the thinking they are each seeking to overcome is left unexplored by most philosophers.

This dualistic categorization tends to be self-perpetuating through the assumption of the integrity of each category, i.e., that each category represents a whole and consistent view. Therefore, if a given philosopher is identified with some aspects of the cultural category, it is assumed that one can generalize with relative reliability that that philosopher will be sympathetic to other aspects of the same category. Deviations from this categorical fit, if noted at all, tend to be seen as anomalies, at best, and inconsistencies, at worst. For example, the biographical sketches provided in this chapter suggest one basis for the identification of Dewey with Category I and

Heidegger with Category II--the public v. the private orientations of their respective careers that finally in the 1930's are essential.

The openness of Dewey's career makes it clear that his commitment was to a philosophical endeavor which made a difference in the active, public world of human experience. However, to interpret Heidegger's avoidance of the public realm as a philosophical commitment to the private, to a romantic cultivation of the "subjective individual," withdrawn from society and "in tune" with nature, would be a mistake.

Heidegger did not seek a haven for personal cultivation in his life in the provinces, but rather active human experience, i.e., social experience itself among people less alienated than "city dwellers" from the on-going processes of the world, less divorced from their own essential interdependence with each other and nature. He spoke deprecatingly of romantic intellectuals seeking personal stimulation with "all this condescending familiarity and sham concern for 'folk character.'" <sup>10</sup> Certainly, Heidegger's deep attachment to nature pervaded his work; but far from signaling a commitment to the romantically subjective, in the view of Heidegger scholar, J. Glenn Gray, "Heidegger's consistent opposition to all forms of mere subjectivity in thinking is probably rooted in this enduring attachment to the processes of nature." <sup>11</sup>

Karl Moehling writes of "Heidegger's [withdrawal] into his own philosophical work and teaching," following his clash with the Nazi party, that "it would be an error to see him as just another German intellectual who chose 'inner emigration' as his response to the German situation under National Socialism." <sup>12</sup> That Heidegger was sensitive to the political (i.e., public) effects of his teaching and clearly intended

those effects was expressed in a letter he wrote to the rector of Freiburg University in 1945. "After I resigned from the rectorate, it was clear to me that my continuation as a teacher would have to lead to increasing resistance against the principles of the National Socialist world-view."<sup>13</sup>

Clearly, there are several categorical "inconsistencies" expressed in these few brief paragraphs. It is not here suggested that there are philosophers who argue that because Heidegger preferred a more private than public career, he must therefore be classified as a "Romantic Subjectivist." However, it is suggested that this biographical distinction plays a part in maintaining the categorical boundaries which influence what philosopher will study what other philosopher's work. A dichotomy which has had a more direct influence on philosophical discussion concerning Dewey and Heidegger is "science v. religion." Philosophers who are generally sympathetic with Category II concepts tend to see Dewey as a shallow apologist for science; and philosophers who identify with Category I see Heidegger's use of the term "Being" as an indication of his "religious" orientation. These concepts are explored in Chapters II and III. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to considering the general pattern of similarities between the two thinkers.

#### General Similarities

Both Dewey and Heidegger held a deep concern for the contemporary quality of human existence. Through their rigorous struggles with the history of western philosophy both became convinced that it was this



philosophic tradition itself which must be overcome if we are to avoid the extreme dangers each saw, dangers to human existence itself. Both proposed a radically different way of thinking about the world and our relation to it. And for both that radical proposal entailed a very deep sense of on-going process as the basis of reality. For purposes of clarity, the thinking of Dewey and Heidegger will be examined individually on three points of similarity:

1. Historical Genesis. As suggested above both thinkers urged the overcoming of our philosophic tradition, suggesting the tradition reflected habitual ways of thinking rather than necessary ways of thinking. One way to support such a distinction (between habitual and necessary) is to illustrate that a particular way of thinking has a history and therefore could have had an alternative development. Accordingly, both Dewey and Heidegger offer accounts of the historical genesis of our philosophical tradition.
2. Human Experience as Process. For both, the most crucial aspect of the tradition to be overcome was the view that ultimately reality or truth, is fixed, i.e., unchanging. More ultimate or basic is the on-going process which allows truths to emerge (and submerge again).
3. Deepest Concern. Both Dewey and Heidegger saw their philosophical efforts as a response to what they perceived as a pending crisis in the quality of human existence--political, social, economic, and technological changes threatening to overwhelm

a people who have lost a sense of control of and connection with these events, who have lost all sense of meaning and value. For both Dewey and Heidegger, the supreme and imminent danger was the triumph of nihilism.

### Historical Genesis

Dewey's historical explanation of the genesis of our "habits of mind" appears in The Quest for Certainty. His approach could best be described as socio-cultural. He paints a vivid picture of our pre-philosophical ancestors.

Most of our simplest tools and utensils did not exist; there was no accurate foresight; men faced the forces of nature in a state of nakedness which was more than physical; save under unusually benign conditions he was beset with dangers that knew no remission. . . . The precarious crises of birth, puberty, illness, death, war, famine, plague, the uncertainties of the hunt, the vicissitudes of climate and the great seasonal changes, kept imagination occupied with the uncertain.<sup>14</sup>

Dewey observes that, historically, humans have sought to attain security in a hazardous world in two ways: (1) by attempting to propitiate the powers that be, i.e., changing oneself in order to please; and (2) by attempting to invent the means to turn those powers to account, i.e., acting on the world (e.g., "He builds shelter, weaves garments, makes flame his friend instead of his enemy").<sup>15</sup> At the time of our pre-philosophical ancestors, the fruits of the second method, active invention, were so inadequate relative to the awesome dangers, that the first method took on a special significance. Dewey writes,

at any moment the extraordinary might invade the commonplace and either wreck it or clothe it with some surprising glory. The use of ordinary things under critical conditions was fraught with inexplicable potentialities of good and evil.<sup>16</sup>

The meaningful categories generated by such a situation were not natural v. supernatural, for the natural had no defined boundaries, but rather ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary was the everyday, prosaic, usual run of events, but always precarious, uncertain and subject to intrusions by the extraordinary. One who offered "knowledge" of propitiation techniques, such as rituals, rites, and taboos, held superior status as one in league with the holy, a bearer of mysterious potency. "Everything which was charged with some extraordinary potency for benefit or injury was holy; holiness meant necessity for being approached with ceremonial scruples."<sup>17</sup>

Such was the social context out of which traditional philosophy grew. "Philosophy reflected upon it [the social context] and gave it a rational formulation and justification."<sup>18</sup> The classical Greek philosophers formulated the conception of two distinct realms. The ordinary was the everyday realm of precarious action, inferior in status because uncertain and changing. "Knowing" in this realm was mere opinion or belief. Philosophy took for itself the realm of the extraordinary, superior in status because it sought the certain and unchanging. It did not seek to propitiate the gods, but to contemplate the Real--perfect and eternal Being. This was the realm of True Knowledge, not mere opinion or belief. The Good Life consisted in seeking this realm, this certainty.

Dewey suggested that this basic metaphysical pattern has carried through the history of philosophy and culture. He accounts for the wide dissemination of the pattern, which could reasonably be seen as belonging

to a small, intellectual class, by pointing to the christianizing process it underwent in the theological development of the powerful church in medieval Europe. Perfect Being became God; the realm of action became the corrupt world of the body and original sin.

Dewey acknowledges that much variation in the content of the metaphysical pattern has been offered throughout history since the classical Greek philosophers. But the variations have proposed answers to "whether sensation or reason affords the basis of certainty; or whether existence or essence is its object."<sup>19</sup> The assumptions of the basic pattern, born in the quest for certainty, remain with us:

(1) that knowledge provides the sole access to reality; and (2) that it is the business of knowledge to "uncover the antecedently real," to gain an accurate picture "in the mind" of what is "really there," separate from and untainted by the actions of the human knower.

Heidegger's historical explanation of the philosophical tradition focuses on the history of thought as represented in the writings of our major philosophers. Rather than presenting a picture of the socio-cultural context from which the philosophical tradition could plausibly emerge and be sustained, as Dewey had done, Heidegger traced in intricate detail the subtle shifts in meaning, the turns in language that marked out the path of the tradition itself. Heidegger saw this project as one of "re-collecting" the history of thought.

The use of "re-collecting" here provides an appropriately early opportunity to comment on Heidegger's use of language. Many scholars with a surface acquaintance with Heidegger's work are distracted by what is perceived as his "strange" choice of words, hyphenated constructions,

neologisms, etc. "Why does he do that?" is the agonized cry. The answer is intimately connected with Heidegger's view of language itself as historical. It is language which gives form to our reality. If we are to come to understand reality as historical, we must learn to relate to language in a "new way"--not as a collection of words which either do or do not accurately represent a prior reality, but as one reality-creating endeavor of human existence. Thus, in "re-collecting" the history of thought, Heidegger is seeking to emphasize the etymological roots of the term itself, i.e., "re-" in the sense of "do again," and "collecting," as a "gathering together." "Recollecting" as "remembering" or "recounting," can be heard and unquestioned as the activity of "setting down the words again." In "re-collecting," Heidegger wants us to hear and question the human "collecting" activity, the bringing together of meanings in such a way as to allow new meanings to emerge.

Heidegger's re-collecting of the history of thought proceeds by way of interrogating what was left unsaid in what a given thinker did say. Although tracing the direction of this history in detail is clearly beyond the scope of this work, the matter of explicating Heidegger's thought on the genesis of our philosophical tradition, i.e., meta-physical thought, is simplified by the fact that he saw Plato as having provided the decisive turn. Thus, we can limit our discussion to Heidegger's reflections on the nature of this "decisive turn." Heidegger writes,

the "doctrine" of a thinker is that which is left unsaid in what he says . . .

What remains unsaid in Plato is a shift in the definition of the essence of truth.<sup>20</sup>

Heidegger presents this shift through a detailed exploration of Plato's "allegory of the cave," which appears in the seventh book of the Republic. The allegory tells a story expressed in dialogue between Socrates and Glaucon. Socrates asks Glaucon to imagine a situation in which men have been living since childhood in a cave with a long passageway up out into the sunlight. Some distance up the passageway is a brightly burning fire, and between the fire and the backs of the prisoners of the cave is the staging paraphernalia for an on-going puppet show. The prisoners are chained, leg and neck, so they cannot move and can see only what is in front of them, the shadows on the cave wall. Socrates elicits agreement from Glaucon that, indeed, in such a situation, the prisoners would believe the shadows to be the real beings.

Socrates next suggests that Glaucon imagine that one of the prisoners be released from his chains, and slowly guided, stage by stage, up the passageway. He suggests the painful adjustment required to look at the puppets, then the firelight itself, the objects in the open sunlight, and then the sun itself. Once his eyes adjusted, however, Socrates suggests that the former prisoner would rejoice in his new-found wisdom and feel sorry for his former prison mates. Suppose he were now to descend back into the cave. The darkness would produce another painful adjustment and he would not be able to see the "reality" of his former prison mates as clearly as he once did. The others would most likely mock him, saying he had gone up only to come back with his sight ruined, thus determining that such an ascent was dangerous and to be avoided.

Thus Plato presents his allegory illuminating his understandings of truth and the human hazards involved for the seeker of wisdom. Heidegger proceeds to ferret out the ambiguity which turned thought around and set it on its current path:

To understand Plato's allegory as allegory, i.e., a story with symbolic meaning, we must have some understanding of the meanings held by the words Plato used. What meanings did they hold for Plato's audience? The word which has come to us as "truth" began in the Greek language as "aletheia."<sup>21</sup> Heidegger suggests that it was used in the sense of "unhidden" or what is "openly present in the region in which man abides."<sup>22</sup> Thus, for the Greeks, the allegory tells a story about transitions from one "abode" to another. "Abode," in all its grammatical forms, is a special term for Heidegger. Etymologically, he traces it<sup>23</sup> to the Greek word, ethos, from which our modern word "ethics" is derived. An "abode" is a "dwelling place," a space within which one is "at home." It includes both a sense of physical location and a familiarity with the meaning structures relevant to our daily living there. As a noun, its meaning is similar to Dewey's "context."

Plato's allegory is organized into a series of four different abodes or stages: (1) the men are chained in the cave, passive, encompassed in their immediate surroundings; (2) the chains are taken off, movement is possible, and it is a stage "more unhidden," i.e., more true, but the man, freed from his chains, is still in the cave; (3) the man is transported up out of the cave, into the open, where things appear openly manifest, not as before in the artificial light

of the fire, but radiant in the newly discovered sun, the "most un-hidden," i.e., most true; and (4) the man descends again into the cave, the darkness, and the struggle between him, the would-be liberator, and the prisoners. For the Greeks, the fourth stage, the descent and struggle, was every bit as crucial in their understanding of aletheia as were the first three stages. A-letheia as un-hiddenness, a privative form, had essential meaning only in an on-going relationship with hiddenness. Heidegger writes of the early Greek understanding of aletheia:

essentially, it is not only that the unhidden, in any kind of way, makes what shines (das Scheinende) accessible and leaves it open in its appearing, but that the unhidden steadily overcomes a hiddenness of the hidden. The unhidden must be torn away from a hiddenness, in a certain sense it must be stolen from such. . . . Truth then is just such a perpetual wrenching-away in this manner of uncovering . . . the constantly wresting extortion of the unhidden, belongs to the essence of truth.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, Plato's story functioned as allegory for his audience because it included the elements thought essential to the truth process. But it also included an ambiguity, a slight shift of meaning which concerned the relationship between aletheia and idea. In the Greek, "'idea' is the outward appearance which gives a perspective upon what is present."<sup>25</sup> Aletheia, as "unhiddenness," and idea, as "appearance," raises, for Plato, the question of the relation between "seeing" and "the seen." What holds them together? In Book VI of the Republic, the question is considered (to which the "allegory" then is a demonstration of the answer). Heidegger quotes Plato, "this, then, which gives unhiddenness to what is known and the ability (to know) to him who knows, this, I say, is the Idea of the Good."<sup>26</sup> Even more explicitly, Plato says of the Idea, "it is itself the master, dispensing both unhiddenness



(to what emerges) and the ability to perceive (the unhidden)."<sup>27</sup> In the allegory then the ascending cave dweller is involved in achieving a "more correct glance," a view more adequate to the "master," the Idea. All comes to depend on this "correctness."

Truth becomes . . . correctness of the ability to perceive and to declare something.

In this change of the essence of truth a shift of the place of truth takes place at the same time. As unhiddenness truth is still a basic feature of beings themselves. But as correctness of "looking" truth becomes the label of the human attitude towards beings.<sup>28</sup>

For Heidegger, this shift, still ambiguous in Plato's allegory, determines the direction of the history of thought. Truth, an on-going and uncertain struggle between the hidden and unhidden in the present for the early Greeks, comes under the domination of the Idea, the adequate representational thought, or in Dewey's language, "the quest for certainty."

#### Human Experience as Process

Philosophers have traditionally sought to ground their endeavors in either the Object or the Subject seen as basic categories of reality. Dewey is well-known for his rejection of "dualisms," as static, a priori, and dichotomous categories, e.g., mind v. body, knowledge v. action, as well as objectivity v. subjectivity. This is not to say that he finds the concepts represented by the terms of these dichotomies useless. His typical pattern is to examine these concepts as phases of a process. For Dewey, "subjectivity" represents the beginning phase of a recurring process of inquiry pointing toward "objectivity." One could say the human actor "begins" in a concrete, subjective situation,

taking some items of belief as objective knowledge. " . . . this does not mean a mere feeling certainty. It denotes not a sentiment, but a practical attitude, a readiness to act without reserve or quibble."<sup>29</sup>

For example, when I go to sleep at night I do not take inventory of the objects in my room and their respective locations. Neither do I make rounds nailing them down. I simply go to sleep secure in the knowledge that objects do not move around of their own accord and I expect no movers.

Now if I were to awaken some morning to find the objects in my room rearranged, my first feeling would probably be one of disorientation, and I would probably formulate my discomfort, "What's going on here?" "How did my desk get over there?" This Dewey would see as the first step in the process to new objective knowledge. Most likely my thinking would lead me to alternative hypotheses with varying degrees of plausibility--"My sons were playing a prank on me," "Burglars were in the house," "Some natural phenomena such as a tornado or earthquake had occurred." If I took no action at this point (e.g., did not talk with my sons, take inventory of my belongings, nor check with the weather station for reports of unusual phenomena, etc.), but simply put forth the view that I had been robbed, Dewey would call this view a merely subjective opinion. It is important to note that the "merely" would be used not because this view came from some inferior realm of knowledge, but rather because it had not been explored, checked out, or tested. This natural process had been curtailed.

Objective knowledge, for Dewey, is that knowledge which has been developed through a process of acting in the world. The view that "I had been robbed" in the above situation remains subjective only so long as I continue to do nothing to either confirm or disconfirm my hypothesis. To share my hypothesis with another person invites the question, "How do you know?" Appropriate answers, e.g., my typewriter is missing; there are strange footprints outside my bedroom window; and my sons seem genuinely surprised by the state of my room, imply exploration and continue the process. When I call the police with my now reasonably reliable "objective knowledge" that I have been robbed, it is with the hope that they will develop that knowledge even further to include who did it and how do I get my typewriter back.

Objective knowledge is not "certain knowledge"; it does not come from some superior realm. It is simply our most reliable knowledge, "reliable" in the sense that we do existentially "rely" upon it, and our shared experience continues to confirm it. As we rely upon this knowledge we have made objective through our actions, new subjective situations arise which both challenge and confirm our past knowledge and to which we must remain sensitive if on-going human experience is to remain vital. Thus, while it is important to avoid curtailing the knowing process with "mere subjective opinion," it is equally important to avoid curtailing it by sealing off "objective knowledge" into an unquestionable "body of knowledge."

From a Deweyan perspective, philosophical arguments between "objectivists" and "subjectivists" make no sense. An apt analogy would be provided if scholars on the fine art of breathing were to join opposing

camps over the issue of whether inhaling or exhaling were more essential to the act of breathing. It is the on-going process which is vital.

Dewey writes, "the adverb 'truly' is more fundamental than either the adjective, true, or the noun, truth. An adverb expresses a way, a mode of acting."<sup>30</sup> This is a remarkable thought, if taken seriously; it is a thought which encapsulates what is expressed in this section. Traditional philosophic thought has sought "ultimate truth" (a noun) to ground its prescriptions for how to live, to act, to be. If Truth is to be found in Eternal Ideas, then one should live in a particular way, if in radical subjectivity, then in another way; even if truth is nothing but physical matter and its movement, then one should live in yet another way. But Dewey is saying that a mode of acting truly is "more fundamental" than truth.

Our minds balk at this construction. How can we know the meaning of "acting truly" if we do not first know what is to be taken as true? Actions are predicated of things, i.e., nouns. The descriptor of action, i.e., the adverb, is typically derived from the descriptor of things, i.e., the adjective, by adding the suffix "-ly." Linguistically, the thing, i.e., the object, is most fundamental or basic. This is not to refute Dewey's insight, but rather to indicate how genuinely radical it is. Language itself embodies the philosophic tradition which Dewey is seeking to overcome. The most fundamental challenge of Dewey's thinking is to grasp "truly" as more basic than "truth," to understand "on-going process" as that from which all knowledge of reality emerges.

Heidegger also pointed to "on-going process" as that from which all knowledge of reality emerges; the term he used for that process was Being (see Chapter II). In Heidegger's work we find a different emphasis and focus, but the essential insight is the same. Heidegger placed a more explicit emphasis on language as the embodiment of the philosophical tradition, i.e., metaphysical thinking, than did Dewey; Heidegger's focus was less the reflective process (Dewey's focus), and more the pre-reflective process, i.e., how is it that anything comes to be.

One of Heidegger's most famous quotations is, "language is the House of Being. In its home man dwells. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home."<sup>31</sup> Language, for Heidegger, is not a ready-made tool that the human entity picks up and puts down to serve his or her purposes. Rather, as human beings, we live in and through language. Heidegger considers language to be more than just a collection of words spoken; it is that which is given to us and which gives shape to our reflections, makes possible changing ways of thinking and being. As language brings out ("lights up") some aspects of on-going reality, it simultaneously and necessarily covers over others. It gives form, light and shadow, to an otherwise "booming, buzzing confusion." Thus, such formulations as "language speaks" or, even more seemingly strange, "silence speaks" are not meant to mystify or point to some cosmic Speaker in the sky, but rather to jog the reader into a new way of relating to language. "Language speaks" and is heard in different ways at different times; "silence speaks" and our guardianship or care involves questioning deeply what cannot yet be said. To say

that we both create language and are created by it is not a meaningless, circular statement, except to one blindly committed to the achievement of truth only in linear, deductive packages from indubitable first principles. Rather it is to say, at a most fundamental level we are involved in an on-going process.

But this wording still does not capture the radical nature of Heidegger's thought. He is not saying that we, as human beings already in existence, are merely unavoidably involved in some larger on-going process. Rather, he is saying that we come to exist as human beings only through belonging to this process, through living our own temporality. In other words, I exist only as a past, gathered into a present and projected toward a future. This is the primary meaning of Heidegger's first major work, Being and Time.

The ek-sistence of man is historical as such, but not only or primarily because so much happens to man and to things human in the course of time. Because it must think the ek-sistence of Da-sein, the thinking of Being and Time is essentially concerned that the historicity of Dasein be experienced.<sup>32</sup>

Comments concerning Heidegger's language are again in order. "Ek-sistence" is used to encourage our hearing its historical meaning, "to stand forth" or "emerge." We typically skip over "existence" as though its meaning were already determined. Since its meaning is precisely the question at issue, Heidegger consistently prods us to hear it in a fuller way. "Da-sein" is a German term typically left untranslated. It literally means "there-being." Heidegger uses it to refer to the distinctively human mode of being, but it resists translation into "human being" as an abstracted, skin-enclosed entity.

The "historicity of Dasein" means, for Heidegger, that the most fundamental structure of the human mode of being is temporality. It is not subjectivity, as those who interpret Being and Time as an existentialist document would have it; nor is it objectivity. The structure of temporality is most fundamental in that it is what first makes possible the activity of thinking, including the possibility of thinking of ourselves as subjects or objects. Dasein emerges, i.e., comes to exist, only as a particular history; and, as he wrote, Heidegger's essential concern in Being and Time was that the "historicity of Dasein be experienced" (Emphasis added.)

To experience oneself as a finite, temporal process is already to relate to the on-going world process in a new way, a way different from the metaphysically-based mode which places a predetermined subject over against an object to be known. To experience oneself as temporality is to experience oneself as part of, belonging to, and responsible to the fabric of interactions which have created and continue to re-create the world.

In other words, if I understand myself as a temporal process, rather than as a measurable entity born at a discrete moment in "objectivized time," I understand my continuity with the past and with future possibilities. I belong to the world process. I am no longer the spectator who in surveying the world scene either finds or despairs of finding the ultimately correct idea to justify or give meaning to my existence. The quality of my existence depends now not on my having the ultimately correct idea, but on the way I live out my temporality, or, in Dewey's language, it depends more fundamentally on "acting truly" in the world.

### Deepest Concern

As was suggested earlier what concerned both Dewey and Heidegger most deeply was the danger of the triumph of nihilism, the belief that nothing has any worth or value for human existence--all is meaningless, so anything goes. Both Dewey and Heidegger believed that our philosophic tradition was responsible for leading us to this dangerous point. Dewey's thinking on the connections between the philosophic tradition and the danger of nihilism can best be explicated by considering our traditional view of the relation between what is and what ought to be. Our philosophic tradition has led to the view that these two "realms" should be clearly separated and to logically connect the two, i.e., to move from the "is" to the "ought," is to commit the "naturalistic fallacy." Dewey suggests that herein lies the most serious problem.

The problem of restoring integration and cooperation between man's beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life.<sup>33</sup>

Recall what was said earlier concerning Dewey's view of the generation of two separate realms of knowledge, the "lower," everyday, uncertain realm of action, and the "higher," extraordinary, certain realm of "True Knowledge." He suggested that while the specific contents of the "two realms" have varied over the centuries, the pattern of separation has remained. One of the specific contents which has varied has been the concept of values. Where are values "located?"

Without the introduction of operational thinking, we oscillate between a theory that, in order to save the objectivity of values, isolates them from experience



and nature, and a theory that, in order to save their concrete and human significance, reduces them to mere statements about our own feelings.<sup>34</sup>

The former, i.e., "Idealist" theories, place values in a "higher" and certain realm. They are seen as "objective" because they are separate from and untainted by on-going human experience. In other words, it does not matter if you or I believe and act on them, they are "true" nevertheless, and our only human task is to come to "know" them.

Over the centuries, with the introduction of modern scientific methods, the "other" realm, that dealing with everyday, human existence, has become more effective in attaining a degree of security. Accordingly, the propitiation techniques (rituals, rites, etc.--see page 12) appropriate to the "higher" realm have taken on a much less vital significance in our everyday existence.

This bifurcated view of reality has carried with it the belief that knowledge of what ought to be was to be found in the "higher" realm; knowledge in the realm of everyday existence, if it is to be seen as "objective" must restrict itself to what is. A view making no compromise with "higher realms" is thus forced to see human values through a lens of "what is."

Dewey has already suggested that one of the unquestioned assumptions of our old habits of mind is the belief that knowledge consists in uncovering the antecedently "real," the "reality" that is supposedly there prior to our acting on and with it. Dewey also suggested that a potential value first appears as a subjective feeling of enjoyment. Only through our actions and choices in a world of competing enjoyments do genuine, objective values emerge. Thus, a way of knowing that seeks

a "picture of the antecedently real, untainted by human activity," uncovers only a potential value's first appearance, and reduces all discussion of values to mere statements about what we enjoy. If I enjoy this and you enjoy that, then I value this and you value that. There is no power to guide or direct implicit in this view, no legitimate ground for what ought to be, because to draw such implications is to commit the "naturalistic fallacy," to logically move from the is to the ought. To extract even the most minimal ethical directive, e.g., I enjoyed such-and-such, therefore, I should continue to enjoy such-and-such in the future, is to step outside the "objective" realm of what is, seen as the reality out there prior to and independent of our actions to uncover or know it.

In the philosophic tradition, which Dewey termed the "quest for certainty," all truth is seen as residing in the most correct, i.e., certain, fixed idea. In order to vouchsafe human values or purposes as "true" they must be located or fixed in some realm of reality. This can only be done in two ways: (1) by "locating" them totally outside on-going experience; or (2) by "locating" them within experience, but "fixed" as they first appear prior to our acting. The former view of values defines their "truth" as beyond the realm of human action; the latter view reduces their "truth" to mere expressions of individual preference with no legitimate claims on future human actions, on what we ought to do.

Note that Dewey said we oscillate between these two views "without the introduction of operational thinking." What is operational thinking from Dewey's perspective? While this question will be explored

in much more detail in Chapter III, some preliminary remarks can be made here. In the previous section Dewey's use of the terms "subjective" and "objective" was discussed. Briefly stated, they are helpful terms if they are used to refer to phases of an on-going process, rather than separated categories or realms. Operational thinking is the movement through this on-going process. It is our subjective situation, with its pains and enjoyments, the reflection on questions and hypotheses growing out of the situation, the testing in action (i.e., operations) of our hypotheses, and a continued concern for the consequences that define newly constructed situations.

As stated earlier, for Dewey a potential value is first perceived as a subjective feeling of enjoyment. It does not become a value, however, until it has been tested and lived in concrete human experience. It becomes "objective," not by being placed beyond the pale of human experience, nor by being conceptually fixed at a particular point in prior human experience, but precisely by being shared and acted upon in on-going human experience. As with all truths for Dewey, values become objective through being acted upon in the world, through being lived in such a way as to produce chosen consequences; values never become certain, fixed truths, but they become more reliable truths the more care that is taken in their forming. Dewey writes that,

the time will come when it will be found passing strange . . . that we are scrupulous as to methods of forming ideas of natural objects, and either dogmatic or else driven by immediate conditions in framing those about values.<sup>35</sup>

His optimistic tone is belied by the urgency with which Dewey returns to this concern; he certainly did not believe that the "time

will come" automatically. "What there is genuine danger of is that the force of new conditions will produce disruption externally and mechanically; this is an ever present danger."<sup>36</sup>

Thus, the danger that Dewey refers to is not a "danger" that ivory-tower philosophers somewhere are contemplating incorrect ideas, rather it is a danger that threatens all of human existence. A way of thinking which either places values in a realm deemed less and less relevant to everyday life or reduces their meaning to immediate emotional responses leads us to a devalued existence; nothing makes any difference. We become the passive pawns of past choices, with no sense of how to (or why we should) make new choices. We are in danger of being overwhelmed by forces already set in motion. As Dewey suggests, "the primary problem for thinking which lays claim to be philosophic in its breadth and depth is to assist in bringing about a reconstruction of all beliefs rooted in a basic separation of knowledge and action."<sup>37</sup>

Heidegger also speaks of danger--"where enframing reigns, there is danger in the highest sense."<sup>38</sup> The term "enframing" is an English approximation of the German, Gestell, a term Heidegger uses to refer to the modern world's mode of perceiving truth. Gestell, which is frequently left untranslated in English translations of Heidegger's works, carries several meanings in German which Heidegger wants the reader to hear. It means "framework"; it also means "skeleton." The connotations of "eerie-ness" and "nonaliveness" are integral parts of the meaning of a mode of perceiving truth, i.e., reality, as nothing but the positivistic "bones" or "framework" produced by a logic of ideas grounded in metaphysical thought. Gestell is the culmination and fulfillment of metaphysical thought from Heidegger's perspective.

In our discussion of human experience as process it was pointed out that Dewey's focus tended toward the reflective process and Heidegger's toward the pre-reflective process. Accordingly, Dewey's talk of danger is centrally concerned with a lack of meaningful directives to guide our reflections. For Heidegger, the "danger in the highest sense" infects us "pre-reflectively," so to speak. It is the danger that prior to conscious reflection we come to assume unquestioningly the metaphysical stance of subject as over against object, as an entity separated or alienated from the on-going world process, as a spectator.

As mentioned earlier, metaphysical thought began, for Heidegger, with Plato's identification of truth with the ultimately correct idea. The path of this search for the ultimate correct idea led to Descartes' proclamation, "I think, therefore I am," and the view that all values are grounded in the self-certain subject; God functioned as an underwriter "insuring" the authenticity of values by presenting them as "clear and distinct ideas." Nietzsche's declaration of the "death of God," was the logical culmination of this way of thinking. Henceforth, all values were determined by this alienated spectator and the sole guiding purpose grounding these value determinations was the fulfillment of the calculated needs of this spectator. Thus, the whole world comes to be seen as nothing but a vast resource or "fund"; and as the inexorable logic of "enframing" grinds on, the human knower even comes to view itself as nothing but a resource.

The terms "alienated spectator" and "calculated needs" have been chosen carefully, yet require further explanation. It is possible

to read the foregoing scenario, interpret it to mean "Heidegger is criticizing human need as a basis for value determinations," then leap to the conclusion that therefore he is speaking for some nonhuman, i.e., supernatural, basis for value determinations. In doing so, the reader would have just "leaped over" Heidegger's meaning. The "alienated spectator" refers to the human subject, certainly, but, what is difficult to grasp, is that "human subject" is a fixed or determined idea, an idea abstracted from the on-going process of human existence. It is an idea assumed when I view myself as a skin-enclosed entity in search of values, i.e., other fixed ideas, to give meaning to my participation in the world. Nietzsche's "standing Plato on his head" was the determination that the "location" of ultimate meaning-giving values was in the individual subjective will, rather than in some other-worldly realm. If values are nothing but what I will them to be, if they are grounded in nothing but my alienated subjectivity, then the search for values becomes the striving to assert my own subjectively-grounded values. The sole need calculated from the initial premise of the self-grounding individual will is the "will to power." The insatiable need to dominate or control the on-going process comes to replace the search for values which can give meaning to participation in the process.

For Heidegger, to exist as human is to live one's temporality reflectively involved in the on-going world process, i.e., to "dwell" in the world. "Dwelling," for Heidegger, includes the sense that we are already participants in the on-going world process upon which we are reflecting. The "danger in the highest sense," from Heidegger's

perspective, is that we begin our reflections already assuming the stance of subject, i.e., spectator. We fail to question this stance as just one mode among other possible modes of participation. Thus, we come to view even our own existence as merely a resource for purposes beyond understanding. Heidegger writes,

only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build. . . .

Building and thinking are, each in its own way, inescapable for dwelling. The two, however, are also insufficient for dwelling so long as each busies itself with its own affairs in separation instead of listening to one another. They are able to listen if both--building and thinking--belong to dwelling, if they remain within their limits and realize that the one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice.<sup>39</sup>

The above quotation is particularly interesting in that it invites direct comparison with Dewey's thinking. "Thinking" and "building" here function much the same way "knowledge" and "action" do for Dewey. Dwelling (a democratic "mode of associated living"<sup>40</sup>) is possible only so long as thinking and building listen to one another (knowledge informs action which informs further knowledge, etc.), as "they remain within their limits" (neither knowledge nor action claims itself absolute determiner of the other), and so long as they "realize that the one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice" (specifically, knowledge is historical; it is a human product and project). In other words, both Dewey and Heidegger saw the necessity for a radically different way or mode of being or living in the world. And both traced the difficulties in attaining this mode to the traditional way of thinking which separates knowing from acting and fails to consider knowing and its products in a temporal context.

The purpose of this chapter has been two-fold: (1) to suggest that our habitual ways of thinking which lead us to dualistic categorizations of ideas and thinkers have prevented our recognition of the similarities between Dewey's and Heidegger's thinking; and (2) to explicate three major areas of similarity between the two thinkers, their historical approach, their view of human experience as process, and their sense that crisis and disruption in everyday human existence is a direct consequence of our traditional ways of thinking.



### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Rodman B. Webb, The Presence of the Past (Gainesville, Florida: University Presses of Florida, 1976), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Morris R. Cohen, American Thought: A Critical Sketch, ed. with a forward by Felix S. Cohen (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 364, quoted in George Dykhuizin, The Life and Mind of John Dewey (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), p. 324.

<sup>3</sup>Dykhuizin, *ibid.*, p. 322.

<sup>4</sup>Hannah Arendt, "Martin Heidegger zum 80. Geburtstag," Merkur 10 (1960): 893-902. English translation (E.T.), "Martin Heidegger at Eighty," The New York Review of Books, 21 October 1971, quoted in Walter Biemal, Martin Heidegger: An Illustrated Study, trans. J. L. Mehta (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, Original Harvest Book), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>For an English translation of this interview, see "Only a God Can Save Us: Der Spiegel's Interview with Martin Heidegger," Philosophy Today 20 (Winter 1976): 267-284. For a further enlightening discussion, see Karl A. Moehling, "Heidegger and the Nazis," Listening 12 (Fall 1977): 92-105.

<sup>6</sup>Martin Heidegger, "Why Do I Stay in the Provinces," trans. Thomas J. Sheehan, Listening 12 (Fall 1977): 122-125.

<sup>7</sup>Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us," p. 267.

<sup>8</sup>Biemal, Martin Heidegger, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup>Heidegger, "Why Do I Stay in the Provinces," p. 124.

<sup>11</sup>J. Glenn Gray, "Splendor of the Simple," Philosophy East and West 20 (1970): 228.

<sup>12</sup>Moehling, "Heidegger and the Nazis," p. 99.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>14</sup>John Dewey, The Quest for Certainty: A Study of the Relation of Knowledge and Action (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Capricorn Books Edition, 1960, c1929), pp. 9-10.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>20</sup>Martin Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," trans. John Barlow, in Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, v. 3, eds. William Barrett and Henry D. Aiken (New York: Random House, 1962), p. 251.

<sup>21</sup>Heidegger uses the Greek symbols; the transliteration is mine.

<sup>22</sup>Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," p. 257.

<sup>23</sup>See Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi and J. Glenn Gray, in Basic Writings: From "Being and Time" (1927) to "The Task of Thinking" (1964), ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), pp. 232-237.

<sup>24</sup>Heidegger, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," pp. 260-261.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 261.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 262.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>John Dewey, Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (New York: Free Press, 1966, c1916), p. 295.

<sup>30</sup>John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, enl. ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962, c1948), p. 156.

<sup>31</sup>Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 193.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>33</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 255.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 263.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 272-273.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 284.

<sup>38</sup>Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," trans. William Lovitt in Basic Writings, p. 309.

<sup>39</sup>Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," trans. Albert Hofstadter in ibid., pp. 338-339.

<sup>40</sup>See Chapter V of this work for a discussion of the relationship between Dewey's conception of "democracy" and Heidegger's conception of "dwelling."

## CHAPTER II

### HEIDEGGER'S COMMITMENT TO THE PRESERVATION OF BEING

In Chapter I it was suggested that one of the major reasons there have been few philosophical efforts comparing the respective work of Dewey and Heidegger is that the intellectual community has placed them in separate, dichotomous categories. The most influential dichotomy effecting that separation in philosophical discussion has been "science v. religion." Heidegger's commitment to the preservation of Being has been taken as a "religious" commitment, an "other-worldly" concern. I take this to be a misinterpretation of Heidegger's meaning. Yet even among those few scholars who have been impressed with the similarities between the two thinkers, this interpretation has functioned as an ultimate stumbling block, supposedly reflecting a basic difference between Dewey's and Heidegger's thought.

A case in point is an article written by Richard Rorty entitled "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey."<sup>1</sup> Through analysis of this article I intend to show that understanding Heidegger's commitment as a "religious" commitment, in categorical opposition to a "scientific" commitment, is a misinterpretation. The second part of this chapter will be devoted to the development of a nonmetaphysical understanding of Heidegger's commitment to the preservation of Being.

### The Inadequacy of a Religious Interpretation of Being

In Rorty's article he first defends Heidegger's work against those critics who, not understanding the thrust of Heidegger's thought, dismiss it too easily. Next, he "offers sketches of Dewey as he would presumably look to Heidegger and of Heidegger as he would presumably look to Dewey."<sup>2</sup> In these sketches he begins with those points upon which they agree. However, when Rorty comes to those points upon which they differ, it is this author's view that Rorty's understanding of Heidegger's thought fails.

### Rorty's Defense of Heidegger's Thought

Rorty begins his article with a consideration of three charges made against Heidegger: (1) Heidegger has sought to avoid intellectual responsibilities; (2) Heidegger should call whatever he wants to do something other than "Thought"; and (3) Heidegger is somewhat arrogantly claiming that he alone is finally giving a correct account of Thought or Being. Concerning the first criticism Rorty points out,

his [Heidegger's] defenders reply that what he has avoided is not the responsibility of the thinker, but simply the tradition of "metaphysics" or "ontology."<sup>3</sup>

Rorty points to Heidegger's statement that "'ontology' . . . fails to realize the fact that there is a kind of thought more rigorous than the conceptual."<sup>4</sup> Rorty considers the meaning of "more rigorous" in this context. It obviously cannot be pointing to "argumentative rigor," for that would be the rigor of conceptual or calculative thought. (For clarification: "conceptual," "calculative," "representational," and "metaphysical" are interchangeable terms which Heidegger uses to

describe the kind of thinking he wants us to move beyond. We "move beyond" it through "Thought" or "meditative thinking," in Heideggerian terminology.) Rorty decides that "more rigorous" means "something like 'more difficult.'" From this Heideggerian angle, ontology is the easy way out; anybody can produce a new opinion on an old ontological question."<sup>5</sup>

As to the question of whether or not Heidegger should refer to what he's doing as "Thought," Rorty suggests that the question itself comes from those who want to oppose the term to something else, to distinguish it from art or religion, for example. But Heidegger would say that these various distinctions themselves (including also the distinction between rational and irrational) are products of metaphysical system-building. Thus one cannot criticize here without begging the question in favor of metaphysics.

The third criticism is simply not true. Heidegger quite explicitly says that "these [Plato or Aristotle's representations of Being as idea] were not doctrines advanced by chance, but rather words of Being."<sup>6</sup> From Heidegger's perspective, to claim that there could be correct and incorrect views of some unchanging unity called Being is to ignore the "essentially historical character of Being."<sup>7</sup> Rorty writes,

to sum up, we may conclude that Heidegger has done as good a job of putting potential critics on the defensive as any philosopher in history. There is no standard by which one can measure him without begging the question against him.<sup>8</sup>

#### Rorty's Account of the Similarities Between Heidegger's and Dewey's Thought

Rorty proceeds to consider the "obvious points of agreement"<sup>9</sup> between Dewey's and Heidegger's thought. In this section he touches

lightly on some of the same material explored in Chapter I. For example, he writes that, "Dewey and Heidegger agree that this initial adoption of a spectatorial notion of knowledge and its object has determined the subsequent history of philosophy."<sup>10</sup>

He also makes the point that,

for both Dewey and Heidegger, the notion of the object as something to be viewed and represented led to subjectivism. . . . Both men say things which reduce to despair the eager and sincere epistemologist, anxious to classify them as idealists or realists, subjectivists or objectivists.<sup>11</sup>

However, Rorty also makes points which are less than "obvious," such as the agreement between Dewey and Heidegger on "the distinction between philosophy and science."<sup>12</sup> As a topic for detailed discussion this would be hopelessly fraught with difficulties, because neither Dewey nor Heidegger divided philosophy and science into neat categories between which either made a consistent and clear distinction. For example, one of the major sources of confusion in Rorty's account of Heidegger's thought is Rorty's equating Heidegger's use of the terms "philosophy" and "Thought," (according to Heidegger, "Thought" is what is needed in this dangerous age). Heidegger himself far more often equated philosophy with metaphysical thinking (hence, with what must be overcome by "Thought"). And while Heidegger consistently used "science" to refer to a positivistic paradigm of science, Dewey did not (see Chapter III of this work). Neither did Dewey consistently use "philosophy" to refer to an obsolete human activity simply "in the way" of overcoming the tradition, as Rorty implies. Thus, it is well that Rorty does maintain his sketchy approach here.

Rorty's Account of the Differences Between Heidegger's and Dewey's Thought

Rorty's discussion of the similarities between Dewey's and Heidegger's thought is less thorough than his discussion of the differences, because, in his words, "it is the differences which are interesting."<sup>13</sup> It is his perception of these "differences" which supply him with a ground for aligning himself with Dewey and against Heidegger. Consider the three following quotations of Rorty's.

1. Dewey wants the tradition overcome by blurring all the distinctions it has drawn, whereas Heidegger hopes Being will overcome it for us by granting us a sense of the ontological difference.<sup>14</sup>
2. Heidegger's hope is just what was worst in the tradition-- the quest for the holy which turns us away from the relations between beings and beings.<sup>15</sup>
3. Heidegger's attachment to the notion of "philosophy"-- the pathetic notion that even after metaphysics goes, something called "Thought" might remain--is simply the sign of Heidegger's own fatal attachment to the tradition: the last infirmity of the greatest of the German professors.<sup>16</sup>

Rorty offers the first statement as an effort to "sharpen the conflict." But note it represents a conflict only if "Being" is understood metaphysically, i.e., as a first causal principle or entity beyond the ordinary world. Rorty makes clear that this is his understanding through comparing Heidegger's thought with Kierkegaard's, contrasting it with Dewey's turning "towards the ordinary world," and connecting it with Heidegger's quest for the holy, which, Rorty states in the second quotation, "turns us away from the relations between beings and beings." However, Heidegger cautioned us frequently that this is not the way "Being" is to be understood. Rorty's exasperation



and failure to grasp another way of understanding Being comes through when he says, "All he [Heidegger] can do to explain why we shouldn't shrug off Being as a vapor and a fallacy is to say that our fate is somehow linked to that tradition."<sup>17</sup>

The third quotation above expressed what Rorty takes to be Heidegger's basic "weakness"--his "attachment to the notion of 'philosophy,'" or, as Rorty also puts it, his "fatal attachment" to the "notion that philosopher's difficulties are more than just philosopher's difficulties--the notion that if philosophy goes down, so will the West."<sup>18</sup> It is this misunderstanding which must be clarified before Heidegger's use of the term "Being" can be better understood.

Having suggested that Hegel is the common ground for Heidegger's and Dewey's similarities, Rorty says, ". . . their notions of what to do with Hegel are the beginnings of their differences."<sup>19</sup> Dewey, he continues,

. . . wants Hegel without the Absolute Spirit. He wants man and history to stand on their own feet. . . . He thinks that German idealism was at bottom, and despite its achievements, a last desperate gesture in the direction of the old Platonic project of offering an ontological guarantee for the pre-conceptions of a leisure class.<sup>20</sup>

Rorty goes on to contrast this with Heidegger, who, he says,

. . . tells us that the so-called "collapse of German idealism" was not the fault of idealism but of "the age," which "was no longer strong enough to stand up to the greatness, breadth and originality of that spiritual world."<sup>21</sup>

He does not comment on the context of these fragments from Heidegger, but goes on to say,

one of Heidegger's strongest feelings, and one which places him very far from Dewey indeed, is that ages, cultures, nations, and people are supposed to live up to the demands of philosophers, rather than the other way around.<sup>22</sup>

The paragraph continues, stressing the importance to Heidegger of

. . . the sequence from Plato to Nietzsche. It is not just that Thought is always Thought of Being, but that Thought is the only thing which is of Being in this sense.<sup>23</sup>

He begins the next paragraph with "all this emphasis on philosophers would look, to Dewey, like academic parochialism."<sup>24</sup>

What is going on here? To suggest that Heidegger felt that "people are supposed to live up to the demands" (emphasis added) of anyone, philosopher or not, should alert the student of Heidegger's thought that something is askew in Rorty's interpretation. Contemporary thinkers are constantly being frustrated and their arguments rendered nonsense by their ignoring of Heidegger's often repeated claim that he is not doing ethics (or they accept his claim and are frustrated by their belief that he should be). To reach this remarkable, and false, conclusion, i.e., that Heidegger felt everyone should "live up to the demands of philosophers," Rorty made connections and assumptions which are important to analyze.

Even a cursory understanding of Heidegger's work confirms that Being is of unique importance to Heidegger. If Heidegger states that Thought is the only thing which is of Being (Rorty's emphases), as indeed he does, then it is obvious that, no matter what Heidegger meant by either term, i.e., "Thought" or "Being," Thought is also of unique importance to Heidegger. However, Rorty makes the next, and necessary

connection only implicitly, i.e., it follows that philosophers are also of unique importance to Heidegger only if philosophers are taken to be the only (or the primary) thinkers.

There are two problems with the latter connection: (1) Heidegger does not equate Thought and the thinker with academic philosophy; and (2) the very fact that Rorty left this connection implicit suggests that he felt the connection was obvious--the only obvious connection between the philosopher and thought has taken thought to be representational in nature. But representational thought is metaphysical thought, for Heidegger, and capitalizing the "T" in Thought is not enough to make the connection Heideggerian.

Heidegger writes,

it is no evidence of any readiness to think that people show an interest in philosophy. There is, of course, serious preoccupation everywhere with philosophy and its problems. The learned world is expending commendable efforts in the investigation of the history of philosophy. These are useful and worthy tasks, and only the best talents are good enough for them, especially when they present to us models of great thinking. But even if we have devoted many years to the intensive study of the treatises and writings of the great thinkers, that fact is still no guarantee that we ourselves are thinking, or even are ready to learn thinking. On the contrary--preoccupation with philosophy more than anything else may give us the stubborn illusion that we are thinking just because we are incessantly "philosophizing."<sup>25</sup>

Thinking and philosophizing are two different things for Heidegger. J. Glenn Gray puts it well:

thinking is not so much an act as a way of living or dwelling--as we in America would put it, a way of life. It is a remembering who we are as human beings and where we belong. It is a gathering and focusing of our whole selves on what lies before us and a taking to heart and mind these particular things before us in order to discover in them their essential nature and truth.<sup>26</sup>

The great philosophers may also be thinkers, but they are not thinkers by virtue of the fact that history has declared them philosophers. Heidegger's writing is filled with his considerations of the recorded thoughts of many great philosophers. But this is not because their words can be "read off," in some direct fashion, as the words of Being. Rather thinking along with, through, and beyond the thinking paths of others who have asked the question of Being explicitly, as have many of the great philosophers, is one way of pursuing our own path of thought. Heidegger himself chose this path, but nowhere did he suggest that philosophy is the only, or even the most important, path of thought. Certainly, such statements as " . . . preoccupation with philosophy more than anything else may give us the stubborn illusion that we are thinking,"<sup>27</sup> or "what is needed in the present world crisis is less philosophy, but more attentiveness in thinking,"<sup>28</sup> do not belie a "fatal attachment" to philosophy. It is not the philosopher who was of unique importance to Heidegger, but rather the quest for and preservation of Being.

#### A Nonmetaphysical Interpretation of Being

Rorty assumed a connective sequence between Being, Thought, and philosophers. It is a sequence which makes sense only if one begins with a metaphysical interpretation of Being, i.e., "Being," as an "other-worldly" category about which only philosophers thought. How is Being to be understood if not metaphysically? Heidegger wrote,

in the question which we are to work out, what is asked about is Being--that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which [woraufhin] entities

are already understood, however we may discuss them in detail. The Being of entities "is" not itself an entity.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, in the early pages of Being and Time Heidegger stated the question which guided his whole career--the question of Being or what makes it possible to say "something is."

### The Ontological Difference

This will become clearer as we discuss what Heidegger referred to as the "ontological difference." Heidegger's etymological studies of Greek thought drew out an ambiguity in the use of the word which has come to us as "being." It can be taken as a noun, meaning "that which is," a being (Seiendes), or it can be taken as a verbal adjective, designating that process by which a being (as a noun) comes to be, its Being (Sein). Thus, the "ontological difference," for Heidegger, is the difference between beings and Being. It is the difference between entities and the process by which entities are determined to be entities.

For Heidegger, the quest for Being originated in the "ontological difference." Simply put, human beings began to reflect, to question, to wonder; they began to ask "what is the basis for all of this?" Plato's determination of truth as idea turned that quest for Being to a search for some ultimately certain and fixed idea to function as a "basis for all of this." But a certain and fixed idea is a picture in the mind of "that which is," i.e., a determined entity; it is not the questioning of the process by which an entity comes to be. Metaphysical thinking, for Heidegger, is any thinking which proposes a fixed idea as the ultimate basis for our on-going being or experience in the world.

Heidegger urges his readers to "remember the ontological difference." In doing so, he is not urging his readers to return to an unquestioned belief in an other-worldly "superior" entity; he is urging a remembrance of the more original question, "what is the basis for all of this?" or "how is it possible that anything is?" Metaphysical thought sought the answer in the ultimate grounding idea, in the idea of the Good, of God, and eventually, of the individual human entity. To dismiss Being as "a vapor and a fallacy" is to dismiss the questioning; to forget the "ontological difference" is to accept the metaphysical determination that the individual subjective will determines the world.

At this point it is important to recall Rorty's early defense of Heidegger against those critics who claim that Heidegger is guilty of arrogance in putting forth a "finally correct account of Being." Rorty pointed out that, for Heidegger, Being did not refer to some topic about which one could hold correct or incorrect views. Metaphysical thought has not been a "mistake" which Heidegger's thought is about to set right. Metaphysical thought has expressed the "words of Being," and "to attempt to offer views of this sort," i.e., correct or incorrect views of Being, "is to neglect the 'essentially historical character of Being.'" <sup>30</sup> Despite the fact that Rorty himself neglected the "essentially historical character of Being" later in his essay when he suggested we should dismiss Being as a "vapor and a fallacy," Rorty has pointed to the key insight to aid in the understanding of Heidegger's concern for Being.

### Being as Historical Process

Being is historical process for Heidegger, but this is not to be simplistically understood as what appears in the history books. It is the whole interaction between beings in the world. It is not only Plato's writing of The Republic or America's victory in the Revolutionary War, but it is also my reading of The Republic and daily living in America. It is my struggle to find the right words now, but also who I will meet this afternoon and a person's reading of this finished manuscript. It is a child's curious questioning, as well as the responses this probing meets. It is what can be said or done (the unhidden), but also what can no longer or not yet be said or done (the hidden). One might dub it the "on-going everything."

At this point, training in logic and conceptual thinking intervene. A concept of something which cannot be distinguished from something else is a meaningless concept. Being is not only all "somethings," but it is "nothing" too. Are we not completely justified in shrugging off Being "as a vapor and a fallacy" as Rorty suggests?

The response to this question would have to be yes, if Being were to be taken as an idea, a concept. However, nowhere does Heidegger define nor urge us to define Being; he urges us to question, to remember, to listen and respond to Being.

### Being as Nonmystical

How is it possible to question, remember, listen, and respond to something if it cannot be defined? Is there not something mystical in this? After all that has been written, does this point alone not justify interpreting Heidegger's concern for Being as a "religious"

concern? To add to our problems, Heidegger certainly does use such language as the "mystery of Being" and the "quest for the holy." With such evidence, how can one reasonably maintain that Heidegger's work does not reflect a "religious" commitment, in categorical opposition to a "scientific" commitment?

To take the latter point first--it should be clear by now that Heidegger did not necessarily use language which simply reflected current, everyday usage. His belief in the historical nature of language required his frequent etymological excavation work. This work often resulted in language chosen because it did reflect older meanings; Heidegger wanted us to "hear" the historical nature of language. If we do some of the same etymological excavation work with the two terms mentioned above, i.e., "mystery of Being" and "quest for the holy," we discover that "mystery" [das Geheimnis] refers to "hiddenness" or "concealment." To refer to the "mystery of Being" is to refer to the hidden or concealed possibilities in the on-going Being process. The holy [das Heilige] is the noun form of the German, heil, which means "whole," "intact," "healed," or "safe and sound."<sup>31</sup> Thus, for Heidegger, the "quest for the holy" is a seeking to "heal" the alienation implicit in the view of the human being as spectator, a seeking for the human connection and participation in the Being process. The "quest for the holy" does not "turn us away from the relations between beings and beings," if turning away is taken to mean away from the ordinary world towards some mystical "other" world, as Rorty suggests; rather the quest for the holy invites us to question those "relations" more deeply.



But even if this etymological interpretation is correct, does not Heidegger's insistence that one cannot define Being still justify the mystical, religious interpretation? What is typically meant by such an interpretation? I suggest that it refers to an epistemological stance of "I (or we) know something is true, but I cannot explain how I know it." In other words, the mystic proclaims the truth of an idea which cannot be defined. But Heidegger does not claim that Being is a true idea which cannot be defined; he is claiming that Being is not an idea at all. It is not a picture in the mind of any human entity, including Heidegger himself, which either accurately or inaccurately reflects reality. Heidegger uses the term to refer to the overall (i.e., both space and time, hence, "world-historical") context from which all ideas, including his own, emerge.

#### The Practical Significance of Being

If Being is not an idea or concept, then what significance is there in Heidegger's urging us to question, to remember, to listen, and respond to Being? If Being is the "on-going everything," certainly we cannot be expected to listen and respond to everything. Herein lies the most significant point. The urging of a "remembrance of Being" pushes us to a new relationship with ideas, a different way of thinking about our everyday world. To remember Being is to remember that there is a temporal context from which all of our ideas, our changing views of reality, emerge. It is to remember that as finite human beings we do not define that temporal context prior to our participation in that context, rather we guide that temporal context through our participation in it.

Heidegger used two phrases to describe this shift in the human role with the overcoming of metaphysical thought; it is a shift from striving to become the "Master of Being" to participation in the world as the "Shepherd of Being." What is the distinction between the metaphors, "master" and "shepherd?" A "master" rules, determines, controls; a "shepherd" gathers together, guides, and cares for. These are apt metaphors for the distinction. In metaphysical thought the human role is to determine the idea which will thereafter rule or control the process of calculation to a conclusion. The human role as "shepherd" is one of gathering together (giving form to, in the sense of "logos," thus, "speaking the words of Being), of guiding and caring for, as one "out in the elements" sharing the fate of the on-going process.

This shift can also be illustrated by considering a specific concrete context--the classroom. (This context is considered in more detail in Chapter V of this work.) The function of the typical classroom is taken to be the transmitting of those ideas predefined as valuable or useful to students after they "complete their education" and "begin to participate" in this society. The great educational debates of the last century have focused on which pre-defined ideas, e.g., the "basics" or the "frills," skills or self-concepts, are to be taught by the teacher. The function of the teacher is to pass these ideas to the student, and the measure of a successful classroom is the percentage of correct ideas received by some percentage of students. This description is not offered to suggest that there are no other values encouraged in the classroom, e.g., the happiness of the students,

the warmth and friendliness of the teacher, etc. But it is suggested that these values are measured against what is taken to be the classroom's basic function, i.e., the transmission of correct ideas. I would like to suggest that the typical classroom functions as a "laboratory" for, what Heidegger would call, "metaphysical thinking."

Within this "laboratory" the teacher functions as the "Master of Being," striving to determine, control, and rule over the ideas transmitted to the students "prior" to their participation in the world. To take seriously Heidegger's urging toward a "remembrance of Being" would entail a restructuring of this "laboratory." Such a restructuring would merely begin with the simple recognition that students are already participants in the world, rather than empty receptacles for predetermined ideas. The restructuring would proceed by sorting out the concrete implications of a teacher functioning as a "Shepherd of Being," a guide within that temporal context in which we all participate.

As previously mentioned, the educational implications of Heidegger's (and Dewey's) thought will be explored in more detail in a later chapter. The purpose of the illustration is to suggest the significance of an urging to "remember Being" when "Being" is taken not as a defined idea, but as the "on-going everything."

#### Conclusions

It is hoped that the foregoing has clarified the possibility of understanding Being nonmetaphysically. Such an understanding is necessary to comprehending the radical nature of Heidegger's thought. In

"Overcoming the Tradition," Rorty expressed a sensitivity to the depth and uniqueness of Heidegger's thought. He wrote, of both Dewey and Heidegger,

. . . they are almost alone in this century. . . . They are unique, unclassifiable, original philosophers, and both are historicist to the core. . . . No other philosophers of this century, save perhaps Wittgenstein, have so distanced themselves from the assumptions and the problems common to Plato and Nietzsche.<sup>32</sup>

Yet, taking Heidegger's commitment to the "preservation of Being," as a religious or other-worldly commitment led to distortions in Rorty's interpretation of Heidegger's work, and produced supposedly basic differences between Heidegger's and Dewey's thought.

Both Dewey and Heidegger sought to overcome the metaphysical tradition. Both saw this tradition as quite alive in our attempts to deal with everyday problems in the world. The assumptions, though not the explicit language, of our philosophic tradition, permeate every aspect of our daily life; they "shape the world we live in," so to speak. That Heidegger's concern was with living in this world is confirmed by his own words.

. . . meditative thinking need by no means be "high-flown." It is enough if we dwell on what lies close and meditate on what is closest; upon that which concerns us, each one of us, here and now; here, on this patch of home ground; now in the present hour of history.<sup>33</sup>

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Richard Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey," Review of Metaphysics 30 (December 1976): 280-305.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>4</sup>Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 235.

<sup>5</sup>Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition," p. 281.

<sup>6</sup>Martin Heidegger, On Time and Being, trans. J. Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 9, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>7</sup>Heidegger, Wegmarken (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1967), p. 170, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>8</sup>Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition," p. 294.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 290-291.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 293.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 304.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 294.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 294-295.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 295. The interspersed Heidegger quotes are from An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. Ralph Mannheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 45. Rorty has taken Heidegger's words out of context, and has added the concept of "fault." A more complete reading is helpful in clarifying Heidegger's meaning here. "This formula [the 'collapse of German idealism'] is a kind of shield behind which the already dawning spiritlessness, the dissolution of the spiritual energies, the rejection of all original inquiry into grounds and men's bond with the grounds, are hidden and masked. It was not German idealism that collapsed; rather, the age was no longer strong enough to stand up to the greatness, breadth, and originality of that spiritual world, i.e., truly to realize it, for to realize a philosophy means something very different from applying theorems and insights. . . . The prevailing dimension became that of extension and number. Intelligence no longer meant a wealth of talent, lavishly spent, and the command of energies, but only what could be learned by everyone, the practice of routine." (pp. 45-46) In other words, Heidegger was not setting up the "collapse of German Idealism" as an event concerning which one can argue about the cause; he was saying the term itself ("This formula") covers over the changes that were taking place in human existence.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Martin Heidegger, What Is Called Thinking? trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1968), p. 5.

<sup>26</sup>"Introduction," *ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>27</sup>Heidegger, What Is Called Thinking? p. 5.

<sup>28</sup>Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 242.

<sup>29</sup>Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), pp. 25-26.

<sup>30</sup>Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition," p. 282.

<sup>31</sup>New Cassell's German Dictionary, rev. ed. (1971), s.v. "geheim" and "heil."

<sup>32</sup>Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition," pp. 293-294.

<sup>33</sup>Martin Heidegger, Discourse on Thinking, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Colophon Books, 1966), p. 242.

### CHAPTER III

#### DEWEY'S ADVOCACY OF SCIENCE

##### The Meaning of Science for Dewey

While the purpose of Chapter II was to demonstrate that Heidegger's thought cannot be adequately understood as a "religious" commitment, the function of this chapter is to show that Dewey's unquestioned support for the "scientific method" cannot be properly interpreted as a "scientific" commitment, in categorical opposition to a "religious" commitment.

This distinction may seem puzzling initially. However, typically the dichotomy, science v. religion, is used to designate the "source of ultimately true knowledge" accepted by a given thinker. For Dewey, science was not a "source" but an "activity." This point leads to the conclusion that Dewey's advocacy of science does not reflect a basic disagreement with Heidegger's thought.

An article written by Michael Zimmerman entitled "Dewey, Heidegger, and the Quest for Certainty" provides the framework for the discussion. Just as Rorty's article (analyzed in Chapter II) failed because it did not explore Heidegger's use of the term "Being" deeply enough, Zimmerman's article distorts Dewey's thought by misinterpreting the meaning of "science" for Dewey.

##### Refuting Zimmerman's Article

Zimmerman's article is less ambitious than Rorty's in that it does not attempt a sketch of the similarities between the two thinkers.



Although Zimmerman does grant that these similarities may exist, in the closing paragraph of his article he writes,

. . . it seems to me nevertheless that we need to examine his [Dewey's] thinking in light of the possibility that it is unaware of the hidden dangers of scientific-industrial technology.<sup>2</sup>

Since the "hidden dangers of scientific-industrial technology" can be seen as one of Heidegger's primary concerns, this concluding statement of Zimmerman's expresses a serious objection to Dewey's thought.

(Zimmerman is arguing throughout the article from what he takes to be Heidegger's position.)

Early in the paper Zimmerman states that his intention is to "try to show that Dewey's philosophy . . . can be understood as a form of subjectivism which Heidegger claims is characteristic of Western thought."<sup>3</sup> He goes on to say,

the disagreement between Dewey and Heidegger can be formulated in this way: for Dewey, the achievement of certainty through controlled inquiry (science) has enabled man to overcome "subjectivism"; for Heidegger, the very possibility of the certainty of science arises from the triumph of "subjectivism."<sup>4</sup>

A cheap refutation of Zimmerman's article can be had by pointing out the misunderstanding of Dewey's thought in the above statement. Quite simply, Dewey never suggested that "controlled inquiry" would lead to "the achievement of certainty." Thus, the question of whether or not this "achievement" has "enabled man to overcome 'subjectivism'" is a moot point.

Zimmerman restricted his attention to Dewey's book, The Quest for Certainty. Even if we similarly restrict our attention, we find much material to help illustrate this basic misunderstanding. Note the following:

The quest for certainty is a quest for a peace which is assured, an object which is unqualified by risk and the shadow of fear which action casts.<sup>5</sup>

The quest for certitude has determined our basic metaphysics.<sup>6</sup>

No mode of action can, as we have insisted, give anything approaching absolute certitude.<sup>7</sup>

Two points which Zimmerman does not question are: (1) Dewey is, at least, arguing for the overcoming of our "basic metaphysics"; and (2) science is a "mode of action" for Dewey. Examination of the above quotations in light of those two points leads to the conclusion that Dewey is calling for the overcoming of the quest for certainty, not the fulfillment of it through science. It is the quest for certainty which has "determined our basic metaphysics," as Dewey words it; this quest has determined the way we view reality, thus, leading to "subjectivism" and distorting our perceptions of the more modest possibilities available through the scientific method.

This refutation was called a "cheap" refutation because it does not "cost" us a deeper analysis; it rests solely on Zimmerman's poor choice of words in identifying science with certainty.

#### Questions Raised by Dewey's Terminology

While Zimmerman identifies "science" with "certainty" throughout his essay, at only one point does he use Dewey's words in support of this identification. Zimmerman writes,

Dewey claims that in our own day, the "failure to make action central in the search for such security as is humanly possible is a survival of the impotency of men."<sup>8</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Zimmerman does not differentiate between "the search for such security as is humanly possible" and "the quest for certainty." Are the search for security and the quest for certainty basically the same thing? Does "as is humanly possible" qualify the meaning in any significant way? Dewey uses other related terminology:

Henceforth [from Einstein's influence on scientific thought] the quest for certainty becomes the search for methods of control; that is, regulation of conditions of change with respect to their consequences.<sup>9</sup>

The search for security can also be termed the search for methods of control, for Dewey. But both "control" and "certainty" are offending words from a Heideggerian perspective. Both refer to attempts on the part of beings to determine or master Being. Has Dewey, through favorable discussions of science and methods of control, ushered in the back door what Heidegger would call "metaphysical thinking"? Answering this question, as well as our earlier questions, requires a deeper understanding of Dewey's thinking concerning science.

#### Scientific Method from Dewey's Perspective

In Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, Dewey writes,

what scientific inquirers do, as distinct from what they say, is to execute certain operations of experimentation . . . that modify antecedently given existential conditions so that the results of the transformation are facts which are relevant and weighty in solution of a given problem.<sup>10</sup>

Dewey's words introduce an important distinction--"what scientific inquirers do, as distinct from what they say." This distinction does not entail a claim that scientific inquirers lie about what they do; they do not say they are doing one thing when in fact they are doing

something else. Rather, Dewey is suggesting that when scientists talk about their activities they are not necessarily discussing them from the same basic level of questioning. For example, some may describe their step-by-step activities in a particular experiment, while others may interpret what they do in relationship to various theories of knowledge. Dewey is saying, set that aside, or in phenomenological language, "bracket" the "natural attitude," i.e., the sedimented view of "science as authority," and question the phenomena of scientific method--what do scientific inquirers do?

Scientific inquirers do what we all do as inquirers in the world. We live in the world and run into problems. When we run into problems, we think about them, try to figure out how to solve them (entertain hypotheses), and then act on the most likely method (experiment). If that method works, if it solves our problem, then we usually go on about our business until the next problem. If it does not work or if it creates new problems, we rethink the situation and try something new. The point is that scientific method, for Dewey, is simply a formalization and refinement of our "common sense" thinking process.

Scientific method and our "common sense" thinking process are also both social in nature. This statement does not refer to the high probability that contact with other human beings will take place during the process. Dewey means this in a much deeper sense. Thinking, in all its degrees of refinement, is made possible only by our ability to create, use, and manipulate shared meanings, i.e., symbols--words, numbers, gestures, etc. Without symbols, born in and given relative

stability or agreed upon meanings through our interactions with each other, all thought would be impossible. Meanings change, certainly, but only through a gradual, social process, and never all at once, i.e., the change itself can take place only by relating the less stable to the more stable.

For example, suppose that I were to create a new word--"borf." To present this new word to the world is a meaningless act, unless I can relate it to other words with shared meanings--"I think it is a good word to describe a new breed of dog," for example. The whole sentence expresses an interrelated set of relatively stable shared meanings. If someone were to question my meaning in the use of "breed," I would search for another "more stable" symbol (or set of symbols). The process would continue. One could argue that I would not have to present "borf" to the world, that I could just "think about" it in the privacy of my own study. Dewey would argue that the process would be the same, I would still be attempting to relate it to meanings which I had already absorbed through social interaction; however, the potential fruitfulness of this innovative new word would be curtailed if I made no attempt to share it with others.

If scientific method is not an esoteric technique which descended upon us sometime in the fifteenth century, but a continuation of our natural thinking process, and if that process is social in nature, then what is the "formalization and refinement" of the process which Dewey suggests characterizes modern science? "Formalizing" or "giving form to" suggests reflecting on, analyzing, and making explicit the process through which one thinks or inquires.

This process can be described from a Deweyan perspective as follows. One first "bumps into" a problem, a "snag," something which disturbs the normal, on-going course of events. Next, one attempts to define the problem, to look at the discomfort and give it form, symbols which could suggest possible solutions. One entertains alternative hypotheses, "if I do this, this might happen; but, on the other hand, if I do that, that might be likely." Next, one chooses to try or test out the hypothesis deemed most likely to solve the problem, to resolve the situation. If the test is successful the normal, on-going course of events is restored, if not, one rethinks the situation (goes through the process again).

How is this process "refined" or made to work more effectively? (The meaning of "more effectively" will be explored in greater depth below; for now "more effectively" can be taken to mean "solve more problems.") Recognition of the social nature of the process suggests an avenue for its refinement. If thinking proceeds only through the creation, use, and manipulation of shared meanings, then the process becomes more effective through the creation of more precise, shared meanings. If efforts to solve common problems can also be shared, if there are more inquirers testing more possible solutions to a given problem, more problems are likely to be solved. However, for that sharing to be productive there must be some reasonable assurance that different inquirers working on a given problem are indeed working on the same problems. This assurance is achieved through a defining of the problem and a recording of tested hypotheses in a language or system of symbols which is highly precise.

For Dewey, a precise system of symbols, a quantified language, is not "truer" in any sense of the word. It does not provide us with a more accurate "picture" of reality. For example, water is not "really only"  $H_2O$ , but treating it in that way allows different inquirers to communicate more clearly concerning what problems they have focused on and what hypotheses they have tested. Dewey writes,

insistence upon numerical measurement, when it is not inherently required by the consequence to be effected, is a mark of respect for the ritual of scientific practice at the expense of its substance.<sup>11</sup>

What is the "substance" of scientific practice from Dewey's perspective? What is the human purpose to which scientific methods are directed? What end does the formalization and refinement of our natural thinking process accomplish more effectively? Scientific methods facilitate the search for better "methods of control," in Dewey's words, "that is, regulation of conditions of change with respect to their consequences."<sup>12</sup> What is meant here? How is Dewey's use of the word "control" different from Heidegger's? Heidegger takes the seeking of "control" as a mark of metaphysical, scientific thinking. Why should Dewey's thought not be categorized as metaphysical, scientific thinking?

#### Dewey's Scientific Method and Heidegger's Thought

In Chapter II the distinction was made between Heidegger's images of the "Master of Being" and the "Shepherd of Being." The "master" image is one of ruling or determining. Within this way of thinking, reality itself is determined by our capacity to hold the correct ultimate idea, the ground from which we calculate. The

"shepherd" image is one of guiding and caring. Within this mode, reality is on-going, never fixed in a grounding idea. We both adjust, and adjust to, its operations; we listen and we participate.

Scientific methods, from Dewey's perspective, improve our ability to make reliable connections between changes. This ability, according to Dewey,

is the precondition of control. It does not of itself provide direct control; reading the index hand of a barometer as a sign of probable rain does not enable us to stop the coming of the rain. But it does enable us to change our relations to it: to plant a garden, to carry an umbrella on going out, to direct the course of a vessel at sea, etc. It enables preparatory acts to be undertaken which makes values less insecure.<sup>13</sup> (Emphasis added)

It is suggested here that the "control" that Dewey takes to be the human purpose of modern science fits more accurately with the "shepherd" image of guiding and caring than the "master" image of ruling and determining. This interpretation is reinforced as we continue to compare Dewey's thought with Heidegger's.

### The Place of Science within the World as a Whole

For Dewey, modern scientific methods create knowledge, but only knowledge. He wrote,

knowledge . . . does not encompass the world as a whole. . . . Not all existence asks to be known, and it certainly does not ask leave from thought to exist. But some existences as they are experienced do ask thought to direct them in their course so that they may be ordered and fair and be such as to commend themselves to admiration, approval and appreciation. Knowledge affords the sole means by which this re-direction can be effected. As the latter is brought about, parts of the experienced world have more luminous and organized meaning and their significance is rendered



more secure against the gnawing tooth of time. The problem of knowledge is the problem of discovery of methods for carrying on this enterprise of redirection. It is a problem never ended, always in process; one problematic situation is resolved and another takes its place. The constant gain is not in approximation to universal solution but in betterment of methods and enrichment of objects experienced.<sup>14</sup>

Dewey's words are quoted extensively in order to more clearly communicate the relationships between science, knowledge, the "world as a whole" (or "all existence"), and on-going process. First, "on-going process" is a process within which we are participants ("the mind is within the world as a part of the latter's own on-going process"<sup>15</sup> [emphasis added]). The "world as a whole" or "all existence" is an on-going process. Knowledge does not encompass this process, and this process "certainly does not ask leave from thought to exist." In other words, knowledge has a limited function, that of redirecting (or guiding) parts of the experienced world. It provides us with an awareness of connections and relations within reality; it does not fully describe or determine reality. As Heidegger would agree, it provides merely a framework (Gestell).

Dewey consistently used the term "Being" as it had been used in the history of metaphysical thought, i.e., to designate a perfect "realm" beyond the natural, uncertain "realm" of the ordinary. As we saw in Chapter II, Heidegger did not use it in this way. While rejecting the content given it by metaphysical thought, Heidegger retained the term as a reference point, an affirmation of the more original questioning for which one historical answer has been "certainty of idea." For Heidegger, the quest for certainty is but one episode in the

questioning of Being. Dewey's work expresses the same thought, but in different language. Terms such as "world as a whole," "all existence," "on-going process," and, as we shall see below, "experience," all hold the same place in Dewey's thinking that "Being" holds in Heidegger's.

What is really "in" experience extends much further than that which at any time is known. From the standpoint of knowledge, objects must be distinct; their traits must be explicit; the vague and unrevealed is a limitation. Hence whenever the habit of identifying reality with the object of knowledge as such prevails, the obscure and vague are explained away. It is important for philosophic theory to be aware that the distinct and evident are prized and why they are. But it is equally important to note that the dark and twilight abound.<sup>16</sup>

"Experience," thus for Dewey, includes not only the light, i.e., what is known, but also the "dark and twilight"; it includes the vague, obscure, and unrevealed. This language is remarkably close to Heidegger's discussions of Being as inclusive of both the positive (the light) and the negative (the dark).<sup>17</sup> In this passage Dewey also points to the danger, or blockage which prevents us from overcoming traditional thought--"the habit of identifying reality with the object of knowledge." The context suggests Dewey is using "reality" as another term for "experience," "the world as a whole," etc. If we translate that to "Being," and recognize that the "objects of knowledge" are those objects which have been made distinct, brought to light, we have a Deweyan version of what Heidegger calls the "ontological difference," the difference between Being and beings.

### The Hidden Danger of Technology

Zimmerman was quoted at the beginning of this chapter as suggesting that Dewey's thinking should be reexamined "in light of the possibility that it is unaware of the hidden dangers of scientific-industrial technology."<sup>18</sup> At a later point, Zimmerman writes,

for Dewey, science is instrumental. But Dewey fails to see that instrumental science (technology) is in large measure independent of man, that it is in fact a kind of ideology.<sup>19</sup>

In what sense can "a kind of ideology" be taken as "independent of man"? An ideology can refer to a set of assumptions acted upon automatically, without question. Such an ideology seems to take on "a life of its own," producing consequences independently of human questioning and guidance. This is the sense in which Zimmerman's words reflect Heidegger's thought.

Heidegger wrote, "so long as we represent technology as an instrument, we remain transfixed in the will to master it."<sup>20</sup> This appears to be a criticism of what Zimmerman takes to be Dewey's view, i.e., "science is instrumental." However, the key word to examine in Heidegger's quote is "represent." To "represent," for Heidegger, is to present as a "view," a "static picture of what is real," or an "idea." Thus, he is saying here, so long as we present a picture of technology as already merely an instrument, so long as we fail to question deeply enough into the ideological assumptions which give it force, then "we remain transfixed in the will to master it," i.e., we remain trapped and determined by the same ideology.

However, Dewey was not presenting a view of technology as already merely an instrument. He was suggesting that if we question the

traditional view of science and technology deeply enough we will discover the human role in relationship to science and technology; only then will the instrumental potential of science be realized. Note

Dewey's words:

The glorification of knowledge as the exclusive avenue of access to what is real is not going to give way soon nor all at once. . . . I do not know when knowledge will become naturalized in the life of society. But when it is fully acclimatized, its instrumental, as distinct from its monopolistic, role in approach to things of nature and society will be taken for granted without need for such arguments as I have been engaging in.<sup>21</sup>

Clearly, Dewey recognized an ideology to be overcome, i.e., "the glorification of knowledge as the exclusive avenue of access to what is real," or as he said it elsewhere, the "habit of identifying reality with the objects of knowledge."<sup>22</sup> When it is overcome, i.e., "fully acclimatized," his arguments will no longer be necessary and science's "instrumental, as distinct from its monopolistic, role" will prevail.

Elsewhere Dewey wrote,

what there is genuine danger of is that the force of new conditions will produce disruption externally and mechanically; this is an ever present danger.<sup>23</sup>

Technology is changing the world, i.e., "the force of new conditions"; and the danger is it "will produce disruption externally and mechanically," i.e., independently of human questioning and guidance.

For Dewey, the urging of a scientific attitude was not the urging to accept science as the final arbiter of reality, the ultimate source of all Truth. This represented the "hidden danger" for Dewey, as well as for Heidegger. Dewey's commitment to the scientific method

was a commitment to a human activity, a mode of questioning, capable of recognizing and responding to its own limits.

### The Monopolistic Role of Science

The previous section was devoted to demonstrating that Dewey was not naively "unaware of the hidden dangers of scientific-industrial technology," as Zimmerman worded it. Zimmerman's argument rested on the false claim that Dewey believed science to be already merely an instrument of human purpose. Heidegger suggested that such a belief leaves us "transfixed" in metaphysical thinking, i.e., we fail to question the ideological force of instrumental science (technology). However, it was shown that Dewey did not hold this belief, and, indeed, did question the ideology which determined science's role as "monopolistic," rather than "instrumental." He identified that ideology with the "glorification of knowledge as the exclusive avenue of access to what is real."

The aim of this section is to show that Heidegger saw the "ideological problem" in the same way, i.e., that it is the "monopolistic" role of science which is to be overcome (not science itself), and that what blocks this overcoming is the traditional epistemology which glorifies "knowledge as the exclusive avenue of access to what is real."

Although Heidegger's thought is sometimes naively characterized as anti-scientific, this characterization is not supported by a careful examination of his work. In his essay, "The Question Concerning Technology," Heidegger invites us to question the "essence of technology."

Heidegger uses the word "essence" frequently. Since by now it should be clear that he does not use it to refer to some kind of "Ideal Form," i.e., a ghostly "what" floating behind the scene of mere appearances, it is important to ask what does he mean by the term. "Essence," of course, does refer to the "what is" of something, "what-ness" in the language of the medieval philosophers. But only in metaphysical thinking does "what is" something ask for its most basic idea, for example, the "essence of man" as "rational animal." For Heidegger, to question the "essence of technology" is to explore its etymological roots and the development of its meaning. Thus, Heidegger wrote,

we must observe two things with respect to the meaning of this word [technology]. One is that techne is the name not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. Techne belongs to bringing forth, . . .

. . . It reveals whatever does not bring itself forth and does not yet lie here before us, . . .

Technology is a mode of revealing. Technology comes to presence in the realm where revealing and unconcealment take place, where aletheia, truth, happens.<sup>24</sup>

Heidegger here is not yet talking about modern technology, which is also a "mode of revealing," but a particular mode. Modern technology, understood now through the history of metaphysics, sets up a confrontive mode of revealing, i.e., nature as object over against the human knower as subject. The human knower is challenged to master nature, and nature itself becomes nothing more than "stock" or "the standing-reserve" [der Bestand] for this process, now taken as the single mode of revealing the real. Heidegger names this mode of revealing Gestell [frame or skeleton]; if translated at all, it is generally translated as "enframing" to emphasize its meaning as a process or mode.

Heidegger wrote, "where enframing holds sway, regulating and securing of the standing-reserve mark all revealing."<sup>25</sup> This passage holds particular interest for our purpose of comparing the thinking of Dewey and Heidegger. Recall Dewey's suggestion that modern science changes the "quest for certainty" to the "search for such security as is humanly possible,"<sup>26</sup> or, what is the same thing, the "search for methods of control; that is, regulation of conditions of change with respect to their consequences."<sup>27</sup> (Emphasis added.) Thus, in a preliminary way, we can note that both agree that regulating and securing suggest a central aspect of modern science (technology).

What does Heidegger mean by "where enframing holds sway"? Or, to word it another way, what does it mean for this mode of revealing to "hold sway." The meaning which most closely approximates Heidegger's is "to rule, govern, as a sovereign."<sup>28</sup> The modern scientific mode of revealing was born in the quest for certainty, thus a part of its "essence," a part of its historically developed meaning for us is a claim to rule as the single mode of revealing the real. Therefore, where the modern scientific mode of revealing rules, where the part of its essence to be the single mode of revealing is left unquestioned, there--"regulating and securing of the standing-reserve will mark all revealing." (Emphasis added.)

Thus, for Heidegger, to question the "essence of technology" is to question its claim to be the single mode of revealing the real, the "exclusive avenue of access to what is real," in Dewey's language. To question this is to have already stepped outside the domination of "enframing," i.e., the "monopolistic" view of science. This is the

questioning that Heidegger calls the "saving power."

For the saving power lets man see and enter into the highest dignity of his essence. This dignity lies in keeping watch over the unconcealment--and with it, from the first, the concealment--of all coming to presence on this earth.<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusions

Early in this chapter questions were raised concerning the differences between the quest for certainty and the terms Dewey actually used when referring to scientific method, i.e., the "search for such security as is humanly possible,"<sup>30</sup> and the "search for methods of control; that is, regulation of conditions of change with respect to their consequences."<sup>31</sup> Zimmerman takes these latter terms as synonymous with the quest for certainty. This leads him to the claim that Dewey viewed scientific method as the way to achieve certainty. If these connections were an accurate reflection of Dewey's thought concerning scientific method, then indeed, he would be guilty of espousing the "form of subjectivism which Heidegger claims is characteristic of Western thought."<sup>32</sup> However, an exploration of Dewey's thought concerning scientific method suggests that these connections are not accurate.

There is a radical difference between certainty, on the one hand, and security and regulation, on the other. Certainty, as a goal, requires the possibility of placing at least one item of knowledge beyond the possibility of change, beyond human questioning and therefore beyond human responsibility. Security and regulation require no such possibility. Heidegger tended to see modern science as striving



to achieve certainty, and striving in a particularly dangerous way. The danger, from Heidegger's perspective, lies in viewing scientific method itself as that one item of knowledge placed beyond the possibility of change and human questioning and responsibility. But this was the danger from Dewey's perspective also. His enthusiastic call for an examination of scientific method was not a call for its blind acceptance as the mode to Truth. Rather, he suggested, if we examine scientific method itself deeply enough, we will come to understand that there is no certainty, that the methods of scientific inquiry have a history, i.e, have emerged through our interaction with the world as a whole and, most importantly, that the scientific mode of interacting with the world is only one way among others within human responsiveness to the on-going process of the world. In other words, Dewey fully agrees with Heidegger that human dignity "lies in keeping watch over the unconcealment--and with it, from the first, the concealment--of all coming to presence on this earth."<sup>33</sup>

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Michael Zimmerman, "Dewey, Heidegger, and the Quest for Certainty," Southwestern Journal of Philosophy 9 (Summer 1978): 87-95.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>5</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>8</sup>Zimmerman, p. 8; Dewey's quote from The Quest for Certainty, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 128. See also "The quest for certainty by means of exact possession in mind of immutable reality is exchanged for search for security by means of active control of the changing course of events" (p. 204).

<sup>10</sup>John Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1949, c1938), p. 498.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>12</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 128.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>16</sup>John Dewey, Experience and Nature (New York: Dover Publications, 1958), p. 20.

<sup>17</sup>For example, in "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger refers to language as "the lighting-concealing advent of Being itself." (In Basic Writings, p. 206). In "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" he invites thought on what he calls "die Lichtung des Seins," the lighting of Being, and relates the phrase etymologically to a forest clearing or opening with the surrounding dark, dense forest. (In Basic Writings, especially pp. 383-384). This imagery is such an integral part of Heidegger's thought that William J. Richardson in his ambitious study encompassing almost all of Heidegger's work, Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought (2nd ed., The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), frequently refers to "Being" as the "lighting-process" *passim*.

<sup>18</sup>Zimmerman, "Dewey, Heidegger and the Quest for Certainty," p. 94.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>20</sup>Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 314.

<sup>21</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, pp. 297-298.

<sup>22</sup>Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 268.

<sup>24</sup>Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," pp. 294-295.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 308.

<sup>26</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 33.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>28</sup>Oxford English Dictionary, rev. ed. (1970), s.v. "sway."

<sup>29</sup>Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 313.

<sup>30</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 33.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>32</sup>Zimmerman, "Dewey, Heidegger, and the Quest for Certainty," p. 87.

<sup>33</sup>Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," p. 313.

## CHAPTER IV

### A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

#### Dewey and Heidegger-A Non-traditional "Epistemological Paradigm"

##### A Different Method of Approach

Up to this point a thesis has been offered, i.e., contrary to typical interpretations of the work of Dewey and Heidegger, both thinkers functioned from the same basic paradigm. Some general similarities have been described, and the two major stumbling blocks to widespread consideration of their similarities (Heidegger's concern for "Being" and Dewey's advocacy of "science") have been explored in depth. A traditional approach would suggest that more details of their respective thought are needed along with good reasons for considering those details similar. And finally, arguments should be made to justify the accuracy or superiority of their paradigm over the traditional paradigm.

Note the wording, "a traditional approach would suggest" the direction of this chapter. Typically, we take a philosopher's ideas to be offering a "picture of reality," either explicitly or implicitly. Our task, when examining a philosopher's work, is to ferret out the most accurate account of that picture, and to offer arguments justifying the acceptance or rejection of that picture as "true." However, this approach is not appropriate to understanding the significance of the work of Dewey or Heidegger for it was precisely this approach that each was

seeking to overcome. Each had occasion, in his own lifetime, to see his work approached as a proposed "picture of reality," and each objected to this approach.

Dewey's influence in education, and in particular "progressive" education, is well known. In 1938, a little book entitled Experience and Education appeared in which Dewey tried to explain to his would-be followers in the progressive education movement that, in effect, they had not understood his work very well. In the introduction he wrote that,

. . . those who are looking ahead to a new movement in education, adapted to the existing need for a new social order, should think in terms of Education itself rather than in terms of some 'ism about education, even such an 'ism as "progressivism." For in spite of itself any movement that thinks and acts in terms of an 'ism becomes so involved in reaction against other 'isms that it is unwittingly controlled by them.<sup>1</sup>

An "'ism" is simply an explanatory "picture of reality," an idea asserted prior to experience which purports to explain future experience. Dewey continues by suggesting that this way of thinking (thinking grounded in 'isms) leads to "either-or" categorizing. For example, he sites the traditional opposition in the history of educational theory "between the idea that education is development from within and that it is formation from without."<sup>2</sup> Because traditional educational theories had been constructed around a picture of "formation from without" the individual, and Dewey had criticized those theories in favor of a "new" education, his work had been misconstrued to suggest that his view was that education was "development from within" the individual. The book continues with further examples of

"either-or" thinking.<sup>3</sup> However, what is most important to note, for our purposes, is that Dewey was not saying that his would-be followers should "get the 'ism right," rather that they should not think or act in terms of 'isms at all, but "think in terms of Education itself," i.e., focus on the lived process.

Heidegger's most explicit objection to his followers' misconstruing the thrust of his work appears in the "Preface" he wrote for William Richardson's work, Martin Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought. Richardson had addressed two questions to Heidegger concerning his thought. Heidegger responded,

I hesitate with my answers, for they are necessarily no more than indications (of much more to be said). The lesson of long experience leads me to surmise that such indications will not be taken as directions for the road of independent reflection on the matter pointed out which each must travel for himself. (Instead they) will gain notice as though they were an opinion I had expressed, and will be propagated as such.<sup>4</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Clearly, Heidegger did not want his work taken as "an opinion I had expressed." The offending word here is not "opinion" (versus truth), but rather "expressed," i.e., pressed out, described. Recall Heidegger's perspective on language; it is not merely a collection of words picked up or used to express a particular view of reality. Language forms, directs, and makes possible different ways of thinking and being. Thus, Heidegger wants his work to be taken as "indications," i.e., "pointers or prods," as "directions for the road of independent reflection on the matter pointed out which each must travel for himself."

Heidegger's emphasis on "pointing" suggests a metaphor which may clarify the distinction being made in methods of approach. Imagine

yourself trying to point out a path to a person who does not understand the gesture. The person examines your hand, its position, the bone and muscle structure, and even compares it with his own hand, but does not turn to move in the direction you are pointing. This, I believe, represents the typical approach that philosophers have taken to the work of Dewey and Heidegger.

While it may be enjoyable, even fascinating, to examine the "bone and muscle structure" of the respective work of Dewey and Heidegger, particularly if it resembles one's own, this is clearly not the approach urged by either thinker. Both rejected any claim to an authoritative picture of reality and objected to an approach which treated their work as such. Heidegger referred to this approach as "incessant philosophizing" (as opposed to Thought). Both urged a different kind of thinking, not one which sought the logical implications of an authoritative idea presumably presented by their respective work, but a kind of thinking that questioned and moved away from their expressed thought--that moved "off the tip of the pointing finger."

How is it possible to think in a different way? What does moving "off the tip of the pointing finger" mean, if it does not mean ferreting out the logical implications of an expressed picture of reality? Or, to put the latter in other words, if Dewey and Heidegger have not given us their respective pictures of reality, what have they given us to guide our thinking? What is that which I am claiming is the same? These are the questions which guide this chapter.

### Kuhn and a Shift of "Epistemological Paradigms"

My claim has been that Dewey and Heidegger functioned from the same basic "paradigm." "Paradigm" is a term popularized in the work of Thomas Kuhn, historian of science, most noted for his book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.<sup>5</sup> Briefly, his theory challenges the traditionally held view of the development of science as an accumulative accretion process adding onto and filling in an ever-more-accurate picture of the "real" world. Rather, he suggests, an examination of the history of science shows a developmental pattern punctuated by crises and revolutions, paradigm revolutions, i.e., radical shifts in the way scientific communities see and talk about their world and accordingly order their facts.

To further clarify his use of the term "paradigm," Kuhn suggests substituting the term "exemplar," in the sense of model, pattern, or shared example. A paradigm is the tacit knowledge, acquired through education and experience, which allows an individual to see one problem-solution as similar to another; it is the group-approved way of seeing an aspect of the world which allows full communication and vigorous exploration within a scientific community. Kuhn's book is rich with examples of "paradigm revolutions" from the history of science, the two most well-known being the shifts from Ptolemaic to Copernican astronomy and from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics. He argues that such "paradigm changes do cause scientists to see the world of their research-engagement differently."<sup>6</sup>

Kuhn's sense of "paradigm" is narrower than the sense in which I am using the term, i.e., Kuhn's theory does not lay out a framework



within which Dewey and Heidegger share a similar paradigm. Rather, Kuhn's way of viewing the entire scientific endeavor conforms to the pattern suggested by both Dewey and Heidegger. Kuhn's theory itself reflects a "radical paradigmatic shift" in the way of viewing the project of human knowing. The "shift," therefore, is between "epistemological paradigms."<sup>7</sup>

Traditional philosophy has offered many different epistemological theories. The point is that these theories fall within the same epistemological paradigm, which sets up the human knower as radically separated from that which is to be known; the goal of knowing is taken to be the achievement of an accurate idea or picture of reality. Traditional philosophy has offered many different views of how we bridge that radical separation, how we come to "know" something; and it has offered many views of how the accuracy of the idea is verified. But traditional philosophy has never challenged the basic paradigm. Even the view that we cannot bridge the separation, and thus can never achieve an accurate picture does not challenge the traditional epistemological pattern (it merely accepts the nihilistic consequences of the paradigm).

The modern positivistic<sup>8</sup> variation on this pattern suggests that we can bridge the separation in "knowing" the physical world through "scientific" verification procedures. However, we cannot "know" values or goals in the same sense. They are not viewed as "out there" in the world, but rather as "in" the individual knower. Thus, there is no separation to bridge. The "knowledge" of values or goals is deemed "relative"; we are trapped on the human knower side of the paradigm.

Kuhn's work is challenging this modern positivistic variation, specifically, by examining the history of science, i.e., how do scientists and scientific communities actually behave and develop (an endeavor remarkably similar to Dewey's suggestion that we look at what scientists actually do, not what they say they do). By examining that process Kuhn concludes that the scientific endeavor does not function as though it were simply filling in an ever-more-accurate unitary picture of reality. Rather, scientists and scientific communities have functioned and developed through radical revolutions in the "pictures" or "paradigms" of aspects of reality which have guided their explorations. Viewed from the traditional epistemological paradigm Kuhn seems to be claiming that we cannot "know" the physical world any more than we can "know" the world of goals and values, i.e., we cannot construct an accurate picture of reality. Thus, Kuhn's critics charge him with "relativism."

To charge Kuhn with "relativism" regarding scientific theories implies that he has offered no standard by which to judge one scientific theory as "better" than another. For example, according to Kuhn's critics, he would, presumably, have to view Einstein's theories not as "more advanced" than the theories of the early Greeks, but simply as "different." Kuhn denies this and suggests that it would be relatively easy to draw up a list of criteria traditionally important to science, e.g., simplicity, predictability, puzzle-solving ability, etc., by which more recent scientific theories would be judged "superior" to earlier ones. Kuhn represents himself as a "convinced believer in scientific progress." He grants, however, that his notion of "scientific

progress" differs from the traditional position. He writes,

a scientific theory is usually felt to be better than its predecessors not only in the sense that it is a better instrument for discovering and solving puzzles but also because it is somehow a better representation of what nature is really like. One often hears that successive theories grow ever closer to, or approximate more and more closely to, the truth. Apparently generalizations like that refer not to the puzzle-solutions and the concrete predictions derived from a theory but rather to its ontology, to the match, that is, between the entities with which the theory populates nature and what is "really there."

Perhaps there is some other way of salvaging the notion of "truth" for application to whole theories, but this one will not do. There is, I think, no theory-independent way to reconstruct phrases like "really there"; the notion of a match between the ontology of a theory and its "real" counterpart in nature now seems to me illusive in principle.<sup>9</sup>

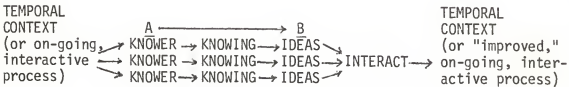
Kuhn, like Dewey and Heidegger, is challenging the traditional epistemological paradigm. He is not saying "here is the accurate picture of reality," nor even "here is how to discover the accurate picture of reality." Neither is he saying "since we cannot construct an accurate picture of reality, the project of human knowing is futile." He is saying that the traditional pattern through which we view and interpret the project of human knowing is inadequate to the experience.

The primary purpose of this discussion of Kuhn's work is to clarify the distinction between shifts in models or theories which fall within a larger epistemological pattern, and a shift in that epistemological paradigm itself. Detailed study of the respective work of Dewey and Heidegger will reveal differing models used to further their purposes, e.g., Dewey's theory of intelligence, Heidegger's urging the remembrance of Being. However, the truly significant aspect of their work is their rejection of a way of thinking based on "accurate pictures

of reality," i.e., a-temporal "truths," and their affirmation and efforts to articulate a way of thinking grounded in the temporal context of everyday experience.

It has been stated before that the traditional epistemological paradigm "sets up the human knower as radically separated from that which is to be known." Both Dewey and Heidegger attacked that pattern at its base by suggesting that we have not questioned deeply or radically enough ("radically" meaning "going to the root or origin") when we postulate (or assume) that knowing begins in the separation between knower and known. Both thinkers suggested that this view itself emerged from and continues to be sustained by the on-going interactive process from which the knower emerges with views which direct his or her on-going knowing activities in the world.

This temporal epistemological paradigm can be illustrated as follows:



Within the traditional model, thinking was the activity of logical calculating that took place between A and B (see above). Thus, the "different kind of thinking" urged by both Dewey and Heidegger is broader than, but not exclusive of, logical calculation. It is a kind of thinking which is aware of its ground and its aim in a temporal context. This model suggests both that ideas and their construction are of critical importance to our on-going interaction in the world and

that no idea is true a-temporally, i.e., beyond human responsibility and the possibility of change. It does not offer a picture of reality to be defined and verified; rather it suggests a different way of relating to ideas as they function in the world.

### A New "Landscape"

Earlier, a suggested metaphor implied that an appropriate response to Dewey's and Heidegger's thought would be to "move" in the direction they were pointing. Heidegger also frequently referred to this direction as a "path of thought." What would be different if we followed this "path of thought"? What follows are descriptions of the "landscape" from three different perspectives: (1) the knower, (2) what is to be known, and (3) the aims of knowing.

#### The Knower

From the traditional perspective knowing begins when the individual confronts the world. The confrontation is a demand for ideas to guide our actions in the world, to justify our participation. If that demand is not met through agreed-upon ideas to guide our actions together, then the guiding idea of the isolated subject seeking fulfillment of individual needs rushes into the vacuum, and spectre of nihilistic chaos threatens society.

Thus the questions that grow out of this paradigm from the knower's perspective are--what is the "true" view of reality by which I should guide my actions? How is that view to be "verified"? How does one convince other knowers to participate in the world according to that view? And if the only "true" view of reality is that an

agreed-upon view is impossible, that we are all "trapped" within our own "subjectivity," then how do we survive together?

For Dewey and Heidegger knowing "begins" prior to the knower "confronting" the world; it "begins" in the on-going, interactive process from which the knower emerges. Knowing is fundamentally a process in which what has been known conditions and influences the knower as he or she interacts with what is known in order to produce what is to be known. To say that process is "on-going" is to say it is fundamentally open-ended: there is no end-point at which one can say "everything is known." And to say it is an "interactive process" is to imply that it is a process which develops by way of mutual and reciprocal activity, not one which proceeds through simple causation. The process develops through how we interact with what is known--how "it" acts on us and how we act on "it."

The focus has shifted from a reality viewed as separate from our actions in the world to the reality created through our interactions in the world. The personal question is no longer why should I participate in the solving of the world's problems, but how am I participating so that the problems remain. Thus, the major feature of the "landscape" from this perspective is that the knower is always already a participant in the construction and reconstruction of what is to be known. That participation may be passive, i.e., as a spectator, but all modes of interaction have consequences in the reality to be known.

### What Is to Be Known

From the perspective of what is to be known, the major feature is that there is no longer a ground for the structuring of status hierarchies in our view of reality. What is a "ground for the structuring of a status hierarchy"? What is a "status hierarchy in our view or reality"?

A "ground" is a basis, a most fundamental level for something. It has already been suggested that the traditional epistemological paradigm sought its "ground" in some ultimately correct and unchanging idea. This traditional view may be diagrammed as follows:

KNOWER → KNOWING → CORRECT IDEA

This model suggests both that there is a correct idea, i.e., an unchanging "truth," and that there is a knower of that unchanging "truth." The process of knowing is thus seen as the struggle to verify a "truth" as unchanging which thereby confirms the knower's status as a holder of a privileged representation of reality. Thus, any idea held to be true a-temporally, i.e., beyond the possibility of change, lays claim to a privileged representation of reality, and can function as a ground for the structuring of a status hierarchy.

What is a status hierarchy in our view of reality? An appropriate definition of "hierarchy" is "any system of persons or things in a graded order."<sup>10</sup> The word is etymologically related to such words as "priestly" or "sacred"; thus it carries connotations of "inviolability," of a systemization from beyond our everyday, changing experience. However, these are connotations which can be intentionally bracketed. For example, a functional hierarchy can be established in order to accomplish

a particular goal, which is to say that a systemization of "persons or things in a graded order" can be established in order to guide a particular segment of our everyday, changing experience. The epistemological problem arises with the establishment of status hierarchies.

"Status" refers to one's "standing" or "place" in the structure of the world. A "status hierarchy" is therefore a systemization of "persons or things in a graded order" in which the "grading" is reflective, not of a temporary function chosen to accomplish a goal in experience, but of the structure of the world itself, traditionally defined as beyond our everyday, changing experience. In other words, the structure is viewed as "out there."

Plato, in his Republic, made the most explicit connections between a privileged representation of reality and the structure of society. Plato envisioned society as a broad-based hierarchy, the masses, unable to achieve the privileged representation, at the bottom, the somewhat fewer, able only to glimpse portions of Truth, above the masses, and the few philosopher kings ruling over all. While Plato assigned different functions to populations at different levels of his hierarchy, Plato's utopia was not simply a functional hierarchy; it was a status hierarchy, the "higher up," the better, the more worthwhile, the closer to the privileged representation of reality. The nature of the socially-accepted, privileged representation has varied over the centuries, as has the explicit connections with "knowing," in the traditional sense, and the social arrangements created for deciding who is at what level of the hierarchy. What has not varied is hierarchical



thinking (a thinking which accepts a systemization . . of people and things in a graded order as the structure "out there").

What perpetuates the form through the many changes in content? Hierarchical thinking implies that decision-making should proceed from the "top" downward, i.e., we grant "authority" to those persons perceived at the "top" of a given hierarchy. The American College Dictionary suggests that "authority" denotes "a power or right to direct the actions or thoughts of others."<sup>11</sup> In granting that power we are granting a built-in tendency toward self-perpetuation. In other words, our view that those at the "top" should make the decisions is reinforced, through this granting of authority, by the fact that they do make the decisions that "direct the actions or thoughts of others." The key to understanding this entrenchment therefore becomes the answer to the question: what is the basis for the view that those at the "top" should make the decisions, or, what is the same thing, what is the basis for our granting of authority?

We grant authority to those perceived as the "closest" to the currently-accepted, privileged representation of reality. "Status" can be described as a "sign" indicating one's distance from the currently-accepted "true view." For example, in our society, most accept, as a "true view," the idea that the world is made up of individuals competing for material rewards; thus, we grant high status, and therefore authority, to those who have accumulated material wealth. We also see a tendency to compete for material rewards as a "sign" that one will "rise" in the hierarchy, and we reward that tendency with material wealth, thus making it a self-fulfilling prophecy that money, power

(authority), and status continue to dominate the current hierarchy. Money, power, and status tend to be taken as mutually reinforcing "signs" that an individual or institution is "high up" in the hierarchy, which is to say, if there is possession of one of the three, we tend to grant the other two.

Note that this granting of authority is based on "signs"--signs of a structure which, by definition, is beyond our everyday experience (a-temporal). We say, "that's just the way it is." The traditional epistemological assumption that there is a "true view," impervious to change, anchors hierarchical thinking through the slow changes in what that "true view" might be taken to be.

While "questioning authority" has a rich tradition in our society, it is a questioning more typically aimed at whom should be placed at what level in the hierarchy rather than at the structure itself. Those who have questioned the structure and connected it with the granting of authority have usually seen the only alternative to be not granting authority to any save the individual subject. From the perspective of the reality to be created by such a view it is an undesirable alternative. The only a-temporal idea it offers to guide our on-going life together is that there is no such guidance because we are all fundamentally separated from each other by our individual self-interests. In other words, we either grant authority to those few holders of a privileged representation of reality, i.e., those "in the know," or we reserve it for the individual subject, i.e., one person's ideas are just as "good" as any other's.

Dewey and Heidegger rejected both alternatives. They questioned the basis of granting authority, not the granting itself. They located that basis not in "true ideas" and the holder's of "true ideas," but in the on-going process of constructing and reconstructing ideas. To grant authority, i.e., the power to direct thought and action, on the basis of this process radically changes the reality to be known. Reality is no longer something "out there" waiting to be captured in an idea and verified; it is our everyday experience in the world. What is to be known is not some accurate picture of reality, but the history, function, and consequences of true ideas as we live them daily.

#### The Aims of Knowing

It should be clear from all that has been said that neither Dewey nor Heidegger took the aim of knowing to be simply the achievement of correct ideas. The diagram constructed earlier in this chapter (p. 92) suggested that something called "improved, on-going, interactive process" functioned as the aim of knowing in this model.

Many objections to the terminology can be raised, particularly concerning the word, "improved." "Improved" by what standards? By whose standards? And how can we agree? What may be considered "improved" by some will be considered "worsened" by others. If concrete meaning cannot be given to the term "improved," then the paradigm is only suggesting that we are all involved in a process which is essentially aimless.

"Improved" by what or whose standards is an objection based on the demand for a "true," unchanging idea which will henceforth guide

our actions together. If that idea is unclear or is open to change, then "improved" has no meaning. "Improved," i.e., "better," has meaning only in relationship to "best." The formulation reflects the logic of ideas. The effect of the new paradigm is not to challenge the formulation, but rather to broaden the reflection. The question becomes does a particular "best" calculated by our logic of ideas "improve" the process we all live daily, our existential situation. We do not live our situation in order to come up with true and unchanging ideas or standards, rather we seek the formulation of "best ideas," we set standards, in order to improve the living of our situation.

But how can we agree, for certainly what may be considered "improved" by some will be considered "worsened" by others? Firstly, we must understand that the demand for agreement is firmly rooted in our traditional paradigm. Disagreement within a paradigm based on the knower knowing the correct idea is tantamount to saying "one of us does not know reality." If agreement cannot be reached, then we have no "true" idea to guide our actions together. However, the temporal model makes no such demand. Agreement in ideas is not a preliminary test of their truth or falsity, but rather a factor in our on-going interaction; our interactions do not passively await authoritative determinations. From past experience we know that agreement in ideas generally improves our interactive process, so that "how can we agree?" becomes a legitimate question, rather than a rhetorical objection. (The question "how can we disagree in such a way as to improve our situation?" becomes an equally legitimate question, and one which is far more urgent given our tendency to consider violence to be the "ultimate solution.")

Finally, consider the objection that if concrete meaning cannot be given to the term "improved," then what we are all involved in is a process which is essentially aimless. What is being asked for? What would count as "concrete meaning" to the term "improved"? It is better to eat than not to eat? to be healthy than to be sick? to live than to die? to be heard than to be ignored? All of these judgements and many more are potential factors in the concrete meanings of any particular situation. Concrete meanings are located in the temporal process of experience, they change; they change as human beings interact in the world. To say these meanings change is not the equivalent of saying the process is essentially aimless. To say that the aim of knowing is an improved, on-going, interactive process is to say that ideas are means or tools which fulfill their aims only in the generation of concrete meanings in experience. Concrete meaning can always be given to the term, "improved," but only as we attend to the process in which we are participating.

### Conclusions

In this chapter I have attempted to give an account of the paradigm change suggested by the work of Dewey and Heidegger. That change has been primarily characterized as a shift from a way of thinking grounded in the generation of true ideas to a different way of thinking which takes the temporal process of experience to be more fundamental than the generation of ideas.

Given the nature of what both thinkers claimed they were attempting to do, i.e., overcome traditional ways of thinking, it was deemed inappropriate to approach their thought in the traditional manner

through fine-grained analysis of their expressed ideas.<sup>12</sup> The decision was made to "move" in the direction they were "pointing," in other words, to describe what some of the differences would be if one were to think in this different way.

The most basic difference is a change in the relationship between human beings and ideas. From the traditional way of thinking, ideas are pictures or views that human beings "have." Ideas can be either true or false; the goal is to "have" true ideas. True ideas should guide human experience; false ideas should not.

From the temporal model, ideas are not simply pictures or views that human beings "have"; they are "tools" which human beings have constructed, and continue to reconstruct, out of experience and for experience. Ideas are never "finished products" which human beings merely "have." Rather, ideas are human constructions which serve a crucial function in the guidance of our on-going experience together. It is a change which does not vitiate the importance of the truth or falsity of ideas, but rather it places that truth or falsity within a context of human responsibility.

The traditional model has served well towards a limited goal, i.e., the production of "true ideas" or "facts" concerning some areas of experience (primarily in what we call the "physical world"). However, the assumptions of this model militate against the production of useful facts in other areas of experience, e.g., the "social world," and, most importantly, these assumptions block an understanding of the human role in the construction of facts.

Consider the concrete meaning, in everyday language, of saying "it is simply a fact that . . . ." Whatever the specific content of that fact, the implication of the statement is, "I am not responsible for it; you cannot change it; and the only reasonable response to it is to accept it." Within the traditional model ideas declared "facts," by whatever method of verification, are removed from the realm of human responsibility (to question the method of verification is to question whether or not one has actually produced a "fact," not whether or not a "fact," as an agreed-upon achievement, is within the realm of human responsibility). This view "lifts" facts out of the temporal context by discounting both past and future human responsibility for their truth. In the case of any given fact, the scientist merely "uncovered" it, and the human responsibility in the monitoring of future consequences is seen as irrelevant to its "factual status."

The dynamic of this view in a world becoming increasingly efficient in the production of facts is the extreme danger to which both Dewey and Heidegger point. The concrete meaning of the increased production of facts viewed through the traditional epistemological paradigm is increased areas of experience to which we respond "I'm not responsible for it; you can't change it; and the only reasonable response to it is to accept it." This is the "force of new conditions," which, Dewey feared, "will produce disruption externally and mechanically";<sup>13</sup> it is the hidden danger of technology, from Heidegger's perspective. The danger is a world determined by technological facts deemed "true" beyond the possibility of human questioning, change, and responsibility.

Both Dewey and Heidegger sought to overcome this danger by "locating" truth firmly in on-going temporal interaction. By vigorously uncovering the human responsibility in the generation of past and present ideas they sought not to discredit those ideas or to substitute their own truths, but to light up the human responsibility in the creation of new temporal truths. Neither claimed exemption from the temporal process for their own ideas. Both urged a close attendance to the temporal process guiding our lives together, to the ideas we accept, modify, and create, and to their consequences in experience.



Notes

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), pp. vi-vii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> The thrust of Dewey's book is remarkably similar to the portion of Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism," in which Heidegger responds to critics who suppose he advocates the opposites when he criticizes "humanism," "logic," and "values." Heidegger writes, "people hear about 'humanism,' 'logic,' 'values,' 'world,' and 'God.' They hear something about opposition to these. They recognize and accept these things as positive. But with hearsay--in a way not strictly deliberate--they immediately assume that what speaks against something is automatically its negation and that this is 'negative' in the sense of destructive. . . . Concealed in such a procedure is the refusal to subject to reflection this presupposed 'positive' in which one believes himself saved together with its position and opposition. By continually appealing to the logical [what Dewey calls 'either-or' thinking] one conjures up the illusion that he is entering straightforwardly into thinking when in fact he has disavowed" (pp. 226-227).

<sup>4</sup> Heidegger, "Preface," to Martin Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, 2nd ed. William S. Richardson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. viii.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 2nd ed. enl. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>7</sup> The term "epistemological paradigm," is still not fully adequate because of the connative connections between traditional philosophy and epistemology, as the search for the certain foundations of knowledge. Richard Rorty's recent book, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), illustrates the choice to retain these connections; thus the shift is one of going beyond traditional philosophy and epistemology. In his historical description of the continental and Anglo-Saxon philosophical traditions Rorty writes,

"on both sides of the Channel, however, most philosophers have remained Kantian. Even when they claim to have 'gone beyond' epistemology, they have agreed that philosophy is a discipline which takes as its study the 'formal' or 'structured' aspects of our beliefs, and that by examining these the philosopher serves the cultural function of keeping the other disciplines honest, limiting their claims to what can be

properly 'grounded.' The great exceptions to this neo-Kantian consensus are . . . Dewey, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger. . . . We can . . . take from Heidegger the idea that the desire for an 'epistemology' is simply the most recent product of the dialectical development of an originally chosen set of metaphors.

. . . Philosophy-as-epistemology will be the search for the immutable structures within which knowledge, life, and culture must be contained--structures set by the privileged representations which it studies. The neo-Kantian consensus thus appears as the end-product of an original wish to substitute confrontation for conversation as the determinant of our belief" (pp. 162-163).

I have no quarrel with using "epistemology" in this way; however, the problem remains to describe what has shifted between the traditional thinking and the thinking of Dewey and Heidegger. Rorty has used the term "metaphor," which is a reasonable alternative. However, "metaphor" also has connotative problems as a "mere figure of speech." At base, this linguistic problem is one of trying to urge a new way of thinking with only language created in an "old way of thinking" available to us. I have chosen the term "epistemological paradigm" because I am referring to a particular pattern, i.e., paradigm, to the way we view human knowing, i.e., episte, in the most general sense.

<sup>8</sup>"Positivistic," as an adjective, refers to a philosophical movement, i.e., Positivism, which began in the late nineteenth century with the work of Auguste Comte. Its general tenets include the ideas that science alone gives us definite knowledge, i.e., "positive" knowledge, philosophy should restrict itself to generalizing from the particular sciences, and the particular sciences themselves are grounded in "sense-impressions" and their verification.

<sup>9</sup>Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p. 206.

<sup>10</sup>American College Dictionary, rev. ed. (1953), s.v. "hierarchy."

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, s.v. "authority."

<sup>12</sup>In The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Thomas Kuhn expresses a view compatible with this decision. He writes, "like the choice between competing political institutions, that between competing paradigms proves to be a choice between incompatible modes of community life. Because it has this character, the choice is not and cannot be determined merely by the evaluative procedures characteristic of normal science, for these depend in part upon a particular paradigm, and that paradigm is at issue" (p. 94).

<sup>13</sup>Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 297.

## CHAPTER V

### EDUCATION AND A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING

In Chapter IV we examined some changes that take place in thinking about thinking and knowledge when we shift perspectives from the traditional explanation and way of knowing the world to that shared by Dewey and Heidegger. It was suggested that one of the major changes brought about by this shift was a change in the relationship between human beings and ideas. Such concerns obviously carry implications for the practice of education. The intent of this chapter is to explore some of the educational implications of the shift.

This intent would seem to signal a simple return to Dewey's language, for certainly few philosophers have been more explicit on the topic of education than has John Dewey. Yet it is the contention of this work that the writings of both Dewey and Heidegger have been largely misunderstood through a failure to understand the radical change they suggested. We have too often tried to understand their writings through the traditional model of thinking. Thus the effort here will be to describe the educational implications as they appear from the paradigm shift itself, rather than from Dewey's writings. It is hoped that this effort will provide fresh meaning for the thinker who then chooses to return to Dewey's writings on the topic of education.

Two preliminary questions must be considered: (1) Why is a new paradigm needed in order to understand the situation in education

in American society today? and (2) of necessity, the language used to communicate the need for a new way of thinking about American education is closer to Dewey's language than Heidegger's. How do the conclusions drawn fit with Heidegger's thinking?

### Education's Need for a New Paradigm

"Education," in its most general sense, comes from the Latin stem, educere, which means "to lead forth" or "bring up." Instituting education thus comes to mean the "leading forth" or "bringing up" of individuals into the society within which education is an institution. Most people in our society accept the term, "democracy," as the basic characterization of what America is or should be. Very few, if any, controversies today are between proponents and opponents of democracy. Rather, if democracy is taken as an issue at all, it is taken as a controversial issue between proponents of democracy who take it to be already realized in the institutions of American society and those proponents of democracy who seek to change American institutions in order to realize a "genuine" democracy. The point is that the educational establishment is warranted in taking as its primary responsibility the "leading forth" or "bringing up" of individuals into a democratic society.

### The Dilemma of Democracy

What is the meaning of this responsibility? Obviously, the answer to this question depends upon our understanding of the meaning of democracy. In Democracy, Stoicism, and Education, Robert Sherman, an educational philosopher and historian (as well as a Dewey scholar), discusses democratic theory. He writes "democracy . . . is a political

theory, primarily a method of government." However, he continues,

democracy also is a moral ideal; it is a vision (vague or sketchy at times, perhaps) of the kind of life worth living and how it can be lived, a vision to which the methods of government must be directed.<sup>1</sup>

In suggesting that democracy is both a method and an ideal Sherman is arguing "that democracy implies a unity of ends and means."<sup>2</sup> The meaning of "a unity of ends and means" will be explored, but first it is important to note that Sherman grants that not all critics of democratic theory agree with his interpretation.

. . . Ernest Bayles, [writes Sherman] says that "whenever we define democracy in terms of product e.g., ideals rather than of process, we defeat the very end we are seeking" (p. 152). Democracy is not an end to be gained, only a means or a method for determining those ends. Democracy is the process of popular sovereignty, and the popular will is determined by majority rule. Thus, Bayles says, "If a people's will is not to be taken, for a given occasion, as final, then we do not have democracy . . ." (p. 162).<sup>3</sup>

While Sherman acknowledges that the process of popular sovereignty is "universally accepted" as a part of the meaning of democracy, he also points out that "the notion that democracy can do without ideals creates its own problems."<sup>4</sup> For example, what happens if the majority decides to eliminate democracy itself, or to disenfranchise particular minorities? A particular sensitivity to this possibility arose in the '30s with Hitler's election to power in Germany. Sherman notes that when democracy is considered only a method, there is a tendency

. . . to deduce and justify actions that offend the democratic intent. . . . Boyd Bode noted this tendency in 1939, and he made it clear that democracy must be considered in some sense an ideal: "The rise of dictatorships is creating an uneasy and inarticulate sense that democracy symbolizes an as yet undefined ideal or principle of social organization and is not to be identified altogether with method."<sup>5</sup>

Why does the mere defining of democracy present us with such a dilemma? Is democracy a mere process or method or is it an ideal? If it is a process, then majority rule should have the final say on all issues. If it is an ideal, then who defines that ideal (if we answer "majority rule," we have just returned to our starting point) and, once defined, does not the imposing of that ideal constitute a negation of popular sovereignty? Recall the Ernest Bayles' quote above, "whenever we define democracy in terms of product e.g., ideals rather than of process, we defeat the very end we are seeking." Note the wording, "of product rather than of process." What is there in our way of thinking which suggests we must choose one or the other, product or process, in order to have a clear conception of democracy? Sherman has argued cogently for the practical requirement of a conception of democracy which unifies product and process. Why is "a unity of ends and means" difficult to understand?

When we attempt to define democracy, we are trying to clarify an idea. From the perspective of the traditional epistemological paradigm, the goal of knowing is the achievement of the correct idea, i.e., the idea which should henceforth govern human experience. If democracy is defined as the "process of popular sovereignty," we are saying that that idea should govern human experience, or, as Bayles says in the quote above, "if a people's will is not to be taken, for a given occasion, as final, then we do not have a democracy . . ." (emphasis added). If we reject the idea that democracy as the "process of popular sovereignty" is the final arbiter of our human experience in this society, then we must seek another idea to fulfill this function of final arbiter.

If we reject process, we reject it because it does not lead to the product, i.e., the ideal, we want. Yet, with good historical reason, we shrink from the defining and imposing of ideals.

The dilemma is engendered not because we have not yet discovered whether democracy is "really" a mere method or a set of ideals, but rather because we assume without question that ideas should govern human experience, that the "correct idea" should function as the "final arbiter." From this perspective "a unity of ends and means" is incomprehensible. The governing idea must be located in one or the other, i.e., the "ends" or the "means"; human experience cannot "serve two masters."

#### A Unity of Ends and Means

Sherman describes his conception of democracy this way:

Democracy needs the regulation or sense of direction that ideals provide, as well as the freedom of speculation and experimentation that is the process of life. These elements work together in a democracy; each regulates and helps fulfill the other. For this reason, democratic ideals may be said to be "regulative" ideals.<sup>6</sup>

How does a "regulative ideal" differ from the traditional ideals which have been used throughout history to indoctrinate, both malevolently and benevolently?

The regulative ideals of democracy are general outlines of the direction in which democracy must move. They are drawn from experience; they are used to organize, direct, and regulate the democratic process; and they are flexible, that is, in their particular formulations they are used only insofar as they direct the democratic process adequately and are reformulated when they do not.<sup>7</sup>

According to Sherman, "regulative ideals" are both "drawn from experience" and answerable to experience, which is to say, they are

"reformulated" when they do not adequately guide experience. "Regulative ideals" are ideas, but they are not "final arbiters" of human experience. Rather, human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas. As an example of a "regulative ideal" Sherman discusses the idea of "openness."

. . . openness implies that democracy must be protected as a continuous process. . . . that the results of the democratic process must lead to a continued opportunity for democratic participation.<sup>8</sup>

As an end or ideal "openness" does not define democracy; it describes one of the conditions which human experience has suggested is necessary for the continuation of the democratic process. It provides us with a guideline by which we can judge the worthwhileness of specific ideas. Sherman's conception of the "unity of ends and means" can now come into focus.

Even from a traditional perspective, "means" must conform to "ends," i.e., the methods chosen to reach a goal "make sense" only in terms of the reasonable likelihood that the methods will lead to the particular goal. Sherman's suggestion that "democracy implies a unity of ends and means" means that "ends" must also conform to "means," i.e., the goals or ideals chosen must "make sense" in terms of the reasonable likelihood that the ideals will lead to the continuation of the democratic process. In other words, the democratic process becomes its own goal. Democracy as a process is not "fulfilled" by the fact of policy determination through majority rule; rather policy determination through majority rule is another "regulative ideal," like "openness," which human experience has suggested is necessary for the continuation of the democratic process.



Given the above analysis, how best can the democratic process be described? I suggest that our commitment to democracy commits us to a continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas. I further suggest that this commitment directly contradicts the limited ideal or goal of the traditional model, i.e., the generation of "true" ideas which should henceforth govern human experience.

The traditional epistemological paradigm leads us to a consideration of democracy as literally, an after-thought. Until we can think about thinking and knowledge itself in light of our commitment to democracy, that commitment will remain a vague generality used to "bless" whatever educational idea is in vogue.

#### From a Heideggerian Perspective

As was suggested earlier, the language used in the foregoing analysis may lead some Heidegger scholars to the conclusion that Heidegger's thinking has been deserted. With talk of "democracy" and its implications for "human experience," we seem to be moving in a direction counter to Heidegger's "path of thought." Certainly, such talk warrants examination from a Heideggerian perspective.

#### Democracy as a Political System

The idea of "democracy" did not play a central role in Heidegger's thought, as it did in Dewey's thought (or as it has in thought concerning American society). In fact, the only locatable reference to the term in Heidegger's work was in a pessimistic context.

Heidegger was quoted in the Der Spiegel interview as saying,

. . . the global movement of modern technology is a force whose scope in determining history can scarcely be overestimated. A decisive question for me today is: how can a political system accommodate itself to the technological age, and which political system would this be? I have no answer to this question. I am not convinced that it is democracy.<sup>9</sup>

Note that all Heidegger is saying here is that he is not convinced that democracy, as a political system, can "accommodate itself to the technological age" (the implication of "to accommodate itself," somewhat vague, would seem to be "to withstand the determining force of the technological age"). Democracy, as a political system, is emphasized in order to point out that Heidegger, without a prior social commitment to the term, "democracy," and to making that term meaningful, has used it as a mere label for a form of government. However, the previous discussion of democracy, based on Sherman's work, does not disagree with Heidegger's point that democracy, as a political system, as a mere method, may not be able to "accommodate itself to the technological age." In fact, Sherman's analysis could be interpreted as a cogent explanation of exactly why Heidegger's point is well taken. Democracy, as a mere form of government, characterized as the process of popular sovereignty, has "no sense of direction,"<sup>10</sup> according to Sherman.

. . . a process must have a direction if it is not to yield, willy-nilly, products--thought and action--that are as often as debilitating or destructive to democracy as they are helpful.<sup>11</sup>

Certainly it is clear that a political system with "no sense of direction" cannot "accommodate itself" or withstand the determining force of the "technological age."

The foregoing discussion is not meant to imply that Heidegger took "democracy" as an issue of concern and came to the conclusion that it was a mere form of government, and as such was inadequate to meet the dangers of the technological age. He simply never focused on "democracy." Heidegger's primary concern was always Being, and a human way of being in the world which questioned and preserved Being.

### Democracy and Dwelling

"Democracy" certainly was an issue of concern for Dewey. In Democracy and Education, he wrote,

a democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.<sup>12</sup>

I suggest that this "mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience," which Dewey calls "democracy," is the same "mode" or "human way of being in the world" that Heidegger affirms and refers to as "dwelling."

Dwelling . . . is the basic character of Being in keeping with which mortals exist.<sup>13</sup>

What meaning are we to draw from such a seemingly cryptic statement? Minimally, it seems clear that "dwelling" is the name Heidegger gives to what he would consider an appropriately human way of being in the world. The wording above confuses the reader, however, because it does not say "dwelling is the human way of being in the world which questions and preserves Being"; rather it suggests that "dwelling" is a part of "the basic character of Being." The first meaning separates the process or means (i.e., dwelling) from the end or ideal (i.e., the questioning and preserving of Being). I am not

suggesting that if the sentence were rephrased the meaning of the statement would then be clear, but its form would be familiar and we would have a sense of how to proceed logically.<sup>14</sup> To suggest that "dwelling" is a part of "the basic character of Being" is to raise the same epistemological problem that was raised in our discussion of democracy, i.e., it implies "a unity of ends and means," a process which is its own goal.

During the discussion of "Being" in Chapter II, it was suggested that "Being" could best be understood as "world-historical process," and the human role appropriate to this process is the role of participant within and "shepherd" of this process. "Dwelling" is the name Heidegger gives to this role. Dwelling is "appropriate" to Being in that by responding to the "world-historical process" as participants and "shepherds" of the process (i.e., as "dwellers") we are assuring the continuity of the world-historical process within which we dwell. Just as "democracy" comes to make sense only as a process the goal of which is its own continuation, so "dwelling" comes to make sense in the same way.

#### Democracy and Humanism

But more was said concerning democracy. It was not taken as just any process the goal of which is its own continuation; rather democracy was taken as the process or continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas. Is this not just another form of "humanism"; how does this thinking move us beyond "metaphysical thinking," in Heidegger's language? In Heidegger's

essay "Letter on Humanism," he wrote,

. . . if one understands humanism in general as a concern that man become free for his humanity and find his worth in it, then humanism differs according to one's conception of the "freedom" and "nature" of man. So too are there various paths toward the realization of such conceptions.<sup>15</sup>

Heidegger proceeded to discuss the humanism of Marx, of Sartre, and of Christianity (in that "everything depends on man's salvation). Then he wrote,

however different these forms of humanism may be in purpose and in principle, in the mode and means of their respective realizations, and in the form of their teaching, they nonetheless all agree in this, that the humanitas of homo humanus is determined with regard to an already established interpretation of nature, history, world, and the ground of the world, that is, of beings as a whole.<sup>16</sup>

Heidegger is objecting to a "humanism" which takes as its basis "an already established interpretation of nature, history, world . . ." in other words, an a-temporal idea. He is not objecting to a "humanism" which takes as its basis Being or on-going, world-historical process. Referring to "dwelling in the nearness of Being," Heidegger writes, "is this not 'humanism' in the extreme sense? Certainly. It is a humanism that thinks the humanity of man from nearness to Being."<sup>17</sup>

Again, referring to "dwelling in the nearness of Being," Heidegger writes,

it is the guardianship, that is, the care for Being. Because there is something simple to be thought in this thinking it seems quite difficult to the representational thought that has been transmitted as philosophy. But the difficulty is not a matter of profundity and of building complicated concepts; rather it is concealed in the step back that lets thinking enter into a questioning that experiences--and lets the habitual opining of philosophy fall away.<sup>18</sup>

Although the referent of "it" ("it is concealed in the step back . . .") is unclear, Heidegger is saying that unless we take "the step back that lets thinking enter into a questioning that experiences," the "something simple to be thought" seems difficult. The "step back" is a step back into the world-historical process as thinking participants, rather than as mere observer-subjects. And this thinking, for Heidegger, is "a questioning that experiences," that looks to what is near in the world-historical process, and that takes this process as the basis of thinking rather than an "already established interpretation of nature, history, world, and the ground of the world, that is, of beings as a whole."<sup>19</sup>

To say that democracy commits us to a continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas is not to say that individually determined human beings with already established and frequently conflicting interpretations of the world determine Being. Rather it is to say that the role of human experience within the continuing situation (i.e., Being) is to judge (i.e., to guide or shepherd, to "speak the words of Being") the worthwhileness of ideas in terms of the continuing situation. Democracy, in Dewey's language, is a "mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience,"<sup>20</sup> and, in Heidegger's language, it is a "dwelling in the nearness of Being."<sup>21</sup>

#### Educational Implications of the Paradigm Shift

If educators agree that education's primary responsibility is the "leading forth" of individuals into a democratic society, then it

becomes imperative that educators have a clear conception of democracy. But if it is found that the traditional way of thinking itself prevents a clear conception of democracy, then it becomes crucial for educators to explore the implications of a different way of thinking, i.e., one which allows a reasonable conception of democracy.

### Education and Ideas

Throughout this work the paradigm shift has been described as a shift from an epistemological paradigm which takes as its goal the achievement of a-temporally true ideas to one which places knowing in a temporal context, thus generating temporally true ideas. It is important to understand that this shift does not directly effect the content of ideas, but rather the way of relating to ideas, regardless of their content.

In education, one might say that "ideas are our business." Whether those "ideas" are called "fact," "values," "skills," "theories," "images," or "feelings," educators are intimately involved with their communication. The clashes of educational theorists have been largely arguments about which ideas to communicate and, once that is determined, how best to communicate or "transmit" the determined ideas. Whatever theory is chosen (or unconsciously assumed), the functioning teacher teaches not only the chosen ideas, but also a way of relating to those ideas. The assuming of the traditional epistemological paradigm has assured that the "way of relating to ideas" has remained relatively constant throughout educational history despite radical changes in the ideas chosen for "transmission." Most of us have been taught to relate to ideas as though they were true (or false) a-temporally.

The above statement may sound somewhat brash; certainly it needs justification. First, the meaning of "a-temporally" must be clarified. Literally, of course, it means simply "not in time." However, such a formulation triggers images of abstract conceptions of time and theological interpretations of eternity; this is not the intent of the statement. The intent is to refer to the on-going, everyday relationship that "most of us" have with ideas. To characterize that relationship as one in which ideas are taken as either true or false a-temporally is to say that most of us accept truth or falsity as a characteristic of ideas determined independently of our own time, experience, and responsibility. Of course, most of us accept that there are certain people whose training and responsibility leads to the discovery of new truths (currently these people are called "scientists"); but note the language "dis-cover -y" of new truths, the implication being that the "truths" were there (both prior and subsequent to the "time" of the discoverer) "waiting" to be uncovered.

While several approaches could be taken to justify the idea that, in general, people in our society do relate to ideas as though they were true or false a-temporally,<sup>22</sup> the focus here will be on the educational aspect of the statement; recall that the original statement was "most of us have been taught to relate to ideas as though they were true (or false) a-temporally."

The purpose of the following discussion is two fold: (1) by describing recognizably typical educational practices I hope to make clear how we have been taught to relate to ideas traditionally; and



(2) by describing alternative practices, I hope to make clear the educational implications of the paradigm shift.

### The Traditional Relationship to Ideas

As children, most of us begin schooling with certain expectations learned from our parents, friends, relatives, and perhaps from the media. Although those expectations may be quite vague in some cases and explicit in others, they can be summed up in the statement, "school is the place that you get knowledge." So with varying attitudes towards that expectation we leave the environment and experiences of the home for the radically different environment and experiences of the school.

In that school environment we learn several things about knowledge. It is something that somebody else, i.e., the teacher, textbook writer, etc., has and is trying to give to us. We learn that knowledge is something to which we can respond in varying ways. We can accept it, in which case, we strive to demonstrate that we have "learned" it by giving correct answers to the teacher in class and on tests. We can reject it by noisily disrupting the quiet flow of "teaching," or by quietly ignoring the teacher (in either case, we are likely to "get in trouble"). A third option is "learning to play the game," appearing to accept the offering of knowledge by remembering the correct answers long enough to pass the tests.<sup>23</sup> But no matter which of these general responses we assume, an idea is taken as something separate from our on-going everyday experience; it is preformed by some external authority and we either "get it" or we do not.

This way of relating to ideas is intensified as we move into middle school and beyond, when we enter a structure which more clearly divides ideas into separate packages, i.e., "bodies of knowledge," taught by different teachers, at different times, in different places, e.g., we learn geometry from Ms. Jones in our second period class, English literature from Mr. Smith in our fourth period class, etc. Ms. Jones and Mr. Smith are perceived as "knowers" of their respective "bodies of knowledge"; it is hoped that they "know" their subject matter well, which means that they hold correct ideas concerning their subject matter. We frequently express the idea that a particular teacher really "knows" his subject matter, he just does not know how to "get it across." The "getting it across" is the teaching function, the passing over of correct ideas to the student, so that the student too might become a "knower," i.e., a holder of correct ideas.

We learn to relate to ideas as though they were true or false a-temporally, because our entire school experience is structured for the delivery of ideas formed independently of our own time, experience, and responsibility. The delivery is considered successful when the student demonstrates that the ideas have been received. The demonstrated reception of preestablished ideas, i.e., scoring well on tests, is accepted as the sign that the teacher has done a good job, the student is a good learner, and the school system is successful.

Of course, it is the progressive failure to meet this criteria which has placed the educational establishment on the defensive. Students are not scoring as well on standardized tests as they once did; even teachers are being tested and failing to meet expectations.

However, the question raised by this analysis is--even if the educational establishment were to solve this test-scoring problem, would we be fulfilling our primary responsibility to educate for living in a democratic society?

If a "democratic society" is seen as a mode of associated living, a continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas, then, at most, the ability to score well on tests is peripheral to our primary responsibility. More likely, a focus on this criteria actively hinders the meeting of our primary responsibility, because it emphasizes and promotes a continuing situation in which preestablished ideas are accepted as the judge of the worthwhileness of human experience.

#### A Different Way of Relating to Ideas

What would it mean to be taught to relate to ideas differently--as though they were true or false temporally rather than a-temporally? First of all, school would come to be seen not as the place that you "get knowledge," but as the place that you learn to construct and re-construct knowledge effectively, to actively participate in the knowing process. The teacher would come to be seen not as the authoritative source and judge of your reception of "true ideas," but a guide whose function it is to help you participate in the knowing process more effectively. Your school experience would not be time spent learning many "correct answers" which may or may not be useful to you in later life, but the time you spend in a most concentrated effort to learn how to question productively.

The above are descriptions of potential consequences brought about by changes in educational practices, but specific changes have not yet been discussed. How could schools be changed so that they could come to be seen as, for example, places where students learn to actively participate in the knowing process?

### Students as participants

First, the recognition that all human beings, even children, are "always already participants in the knowing process" in some manner (see Chapter IV, p. 88) is suggestive of changes. Children are not little empty receptacles that have dropped into the classroom out of nowhere; they are human beings with past experiences. Those experiences have been a form of participation in the knowing process; they have accepted and acted upon some ideas and have rejected others. This is largely a passive form of participation in that most children are unaware of their own roles as participants; they have simply received certain ideas. Active participation entails the ability to reflect, question, and choose. It is an ability developed gradually and with much practice (i.e., one cannot spend twelve to sixteen years being "filled up with correct answers" and then be expected to respond appropriately to a demand to reflect, question, and choose). Thus, the teacher's first task is to ascertain what experiences and ideas students bring with them to the classroom. A teacher cannot be charged with the responsibility for developing an ability if the means for determining the starting point, the current state of that ability, is denied the teacher.

In the present educational structure those means are denied the teacher through limitations on time and expectations. Determining the current state of the ability for active participation in the knowing process requires time for listening. It is not possible to take this time in a classroom of thirty or more students in which the primary expectation which must be met by both teacher and student is the transmission of specified ideas from teacher to student. For the teacher to take classroom time to listen to anything other than evidence of successful transmission becomes a self-indulgent frill for which both the teacher and the student will be penalized.

While it is true that smaller class sizes which allow "individual attention" have been seen as desirable in the early elementary years, the fact that it has been seen as desirable primarily in the early elementary years suggests the traditional rationale towards educating. The rationale could be stated--"the young child needs individual attention in order to make the transition from the home situation, in which Mommy listened to all of his or her ideas, to the school situation, in which the child is expected to listen to the ideas of the teacher." That smaller classes are seen as less necessary as the student matures and "gets down to the serious business of learning" supports this interpretation.

Class sizes which allow for mutual communication between teacher and student as well as students with each other are a continuing necessity in the development of active participants in the knowing process. Teachers must be expected, encouraged, and taught how to use classroom time for productive mutual communication. This

requires the development of new criteria by which to judge "good teachers." As long as a "good teacher" is seen as one capable of maintaining a quiet classroom and producing students who score well on tests, then no matter how small the classroom, mutual communication will not take place, students will learn to be quiet and listen, and the teacher will continue to function merely as an authoritative source.

### Teacher function

What is the difference in teacher function between authoritative source and guide? The teacher as authoritative source is the repository of all correct answers pertinent to any particular class. The teacher's function in this role, of course, is to transmit these answers clearly to the students. All allowable questions of the teacher in this role ultimately must take the form "did I get it right?"; to question the correctness of the answers clearly transmitted would be to question the authority of the teacher. The model being offered to the students by the teacher as authoritative source is the knower who holds the correct ideas (passive participation in the knowing process).

On the other hand, the teacher functioning as guide is a model of active participation in the knowing process. She or he reflects, questions, and chooses ideas--and communicates the how and why of this process. Ideas as "facts" are presented as society's best ideas so far, and students are encouraged to question these "facts" if they can find good reasons for doing so. Such questioning does not

challenge the authority of the teacher as guide because that authority does not rest on the correctness of ideas held, but on the quality of participation in the knowing process.

Neither does the authority of the teacher as guide rest on location in a status hierarchy (see Chapter IV, pp. 88-92 ). In other words, the teacher does not say, "you do what I say because I'm your teacher," i.e., hold higher status than you do, "and if you don't like it, you can go to the principal's office," i.e., where someone with higher status will enforce it. This common educational practice is one of the most basic ways that we come to believe in the inevitability of status hierarchies.

The authority of the teacher as guide must rest on the actual functioning of that teacher. In other words, the teacher as guide is the person "in charge of the tour." The "tour guide" has training, maps, and past experiences, but the authority of the guide rests on the perceived ability to "get people where they want to go." To use this metaphor to argue that children do not know "where they want to go" is to misconceive the aim of knowing as the reception of particular ideas. Children may not know what particular ideas, i.e., what "subject matter" they need to consider in order to function effectively in the world, but they want to function effectively. They want to do and experience things; but doing and experiencing require effective ideas, i.e., plans of action that lead to desired results. It is the teacher's responsibility to show the connections between ideas and experience, to guide the developing ability of students to form effective ideas. Teachers must have both the freedom and the power to meet that responsibility.

To say that the teacher as guide is the person "in charge of the tour" is not to say that the individual teacher of a particular classroom should have absolute power over the students of that classroom. It is to say that the teacher should have functional power, i.e., the available means to fulfill a function, to meet a responsibility. Realistically, there will always be disagreements between individual teachers and the students in their classrooms over the limits of that functional power. Who should decide? The primary point to be made here is that there are no good reasons to support the referring of those disagreements to those traditionally perceived as "higher up," i.e., vice-principals, principals, etc. In fact, the whole notion of "higher up" collapses into a mere "different function." The administrative function becomes one of coordination between the needs of the educational endeavor and the resources available in the larger community. Those individuals fulfilling the administrative function are the "furthest away" from the direct experience of the classroom within the educational community, and therefore, practically speaking, have the weakest claim to expertize on issues of classroom practice. Disagreements between individual teachers and the students in their classroom should be adjudicated by those with the strongest claim to expertize, those with the most direct experience of classroom issues, perhaps a committee of other teachers and students recognized for their developed and developing ability to make fair judgments.

#### A different school experience

Finally, what changes in educational practices would be necessary for school experience to be seen as "the time you spend in a



concentrated effort to learn how to question productively" rather than as "time spent learning many correct answers which may or may not be useful to you in later life"? There are two key aspects to this change. One is the shift from passive to active tense; the other is the shift from answers to productive questions.

The shift from "time spent" to "time you spend" is important. But from a traditional perspective this shift is taken as shorthand for "motivating the student." In other words, not only is the teacher made responsible for "teaching" his or her subject matter, but also his or her psychological motivations towards learning. The students must learn the "proper motivation" in order to feel that they are "personally involved," i.e., spending their own time learning the correct answers. Note that what is not questioned in this scenario is that the teacher has what is to be received, i.e., subject matter or proper motivation. Learning remains a passive affair even under these "active" conditions. A genuinely active school experience entails not the receiving of "proper motivation" from the teacher, but the connecting of ideas with what does motivate the student in his or her on-going experience, with the goal of broadening and enriching that experience. Of course, this "connecting of ideas" requires most of the specific changes already discussed in this section.

Some of the specific changes discussed above have been tried, e.g., smaller classroom sizes, emphasis on group discussions, teacher function as guide rather than authoritative source. They have been tried with little expressed understanding of the institutional forces working against their success, but more importantly, without a clear

recognition of what would count as "success." Most school change efforts have not questioned our institutional obsession with "correct answers"<sup>25</sup> rather they have measured their success or failure by this criteria, i.e., did whatever change attempted improve test scores? To refer all questions of educational change to the criteria of rising or falling test scores is to direct all educational activities towards the reception of knowledge.

The shift of emphasis from "correct answers" to "productive questioning" is not a swing from one pole of a dichotomy to another; productive questioning includes, indeed requires, the reception of correct answers. But the knowing process does not end with the reception, as education's heavy emphasis on testing would imply. Testing for correct answers received may have a function, but it would be strictly a diagnostic one. A student must know what the current facts are before he or she can continue the process of productive questioning; otherwise the questioning is not likely to be productive of genuine changes in the student's on-going experience in the world. In other words, the classroom should be the place where the student hears, "here are the current facts. Now what are you going to do with them? Accept them? On what grounds? And what will the consequences be? Change them? How? etc." The classroom should be the place which fosters the continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas; it should foster a democratic society.

### Conclusions

It should be clear from the radical nature of the changes described that what has been offered in this analysis is not a quick

solution to a vexing problem. Indeed, we are discussing diverting a direction of thought which goes all the way back at least to Plato. Certainly, both Dewey and Heidegger saw the changes they were urging in just such momentous terms, and neither expressed the belief that it would be quick or easy.

The intent of this study has been to show that Dewey and Heidegger shared a common understanding of the human problems engendered by traditional ways of thinking, and that this common understanding is the most significant aspect of their thought.

Both understood the way of thinking they were trying to overcome as a way rooted in the beginnings of western philosophy and devoted to the achievement of "true ideas." Both identified traditional thinking as a mode which is grounded in the radical separation between knower and known, which proceeds by way of "either/or" categorizing, and which results in the determination of the "truth" of ideas, a determination which has the effect of placing "true ideas" beyond the realm of human responsibility.

Both Dewey and Heidegger were alarmed by the implications of this traditional model of thinking for meaningful human existence itself (and both saw "meaningful human existence" in terms of the freedom and ability to question and guide human experience). They urged a different way of thinking, one rooted in the on-going process of experience. It is a way of thinking which is capable of reflecting on the temporality of both the knower and the known, and, in doing so, it radically changes the relationship between human beings and ideas.

In order to explore the significance of this change, it was decided that Dewey and Heidegger should be approached on their own terms, i.e., as suggesting a different way of thinking rather than as offering a package of "true ideas." Neither was saying "here is a picture of reality"; both were saying "try thinking in this way."

"Moving" in this direction, we explored the significance of understanding the human knower as a participant in the knowing process, and the implications of knowing the world without the assumption of a static structure to govern "status relationships" and ground "status hierarchies." We found that the "achievement of true ideas" did not function adequately as the aim of knowing so long as that "achievement" was seen as taking the "true idea" out of the context of human questioning and change. Only concrete meanings actualized within experience can function as the aim of knowing, can give "meaning" to the knowing process.

Finally, in this chapter, some of the educational implications of this different way of thinking were suggested. The implicit commitment of American education to educate students for a democratic society was explored. The analysis suggested that the meaning of "democracy" itself was unclear when viewed through the traditional model of thinking. Only through the temporal model of thinking, suggested by Dewey and Heidegger, does a clear conception of "democracy" emerge as "a continuing situation in which human experience is the judge of the worthwhileness of ideas."

This conception of democracy necessitates a radical restructuring of educational practices if the commitment to educate students

for a democratic society is taken seriously. For example, if children are understood, not as empty receptacles for "true ideas," but as human participants in the knowing process, classtime must be restructured to allow for questioning and listening, for genuine interaction between teachers and students. As the goal becomes active participation, the emphasis on testing for the successful reception of "true ideas" is lessened. Teachers would be educated to perform the function of "guide" for students, rather than the function of "authoritative source." And finally, teachers must have the functional power to meet these responsibilities rather than merely the "power" accorded them by their "status" in the organizational hierarchy of the school.

Many readers of this analysis will be tempted to respond at this point by saying, "this is all very nice, but it is totally unrealistic." Of course, in one sense, this analysis is "unrealistic," i.e., it does not describe reality, as it is. But that fact does not justify a dismissal of the responsibility to think in this direction, unless we are willing to dismiss the possibility of any change whatsoever, for any change changes reality to some degree. The important question is "is the degree of change appropriate to the depth and seriousness of the problem?" This entire analysis is offered as an affirmative response to that question.

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Robert R. Sherman, Democracy, Stoicism and Education: An Essay in the History of Freedom and Reason (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 7, page references refer to Ernest Bayle's book, Democratic Educational Theory (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 8, Boyd Bode quotation from his "Ends and Means in Education, or the Conflicts in Our Cultural Heritage," p. 13, in What Is Democracy? edited by Winifred Johnston (Norman, Oklahoma: Cooperative Books, 1939).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>9</sup>Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us: Der Spiegel's Interview," p. 276.

<sup>10</sup>Sherman, Democracy, Stoicism and Education, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 87.

<sup>13</sup>Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in Basic Writings, p. 338.

<sup>14</sup>The definition of "dwelling" would be necessary, as would the definition of "Being." But most troublesome would be the clarification of the ideal which calls for its own "questioning and preserving."

<sup>15</sup>Heidegger, Basic Writings, p. 201.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 201-202.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>20</sup>Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 87.

<sup>21</sup>Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," p. 222.

<sup>22</sup>One of the most productive approaches for this purpose could be taken through the relatively new phenomenologically oriented discipline, "sociology of knowledge." See for example, Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1967, c1966); Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger, and Hansfried Kellner, The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness (N.Y.: Random House, 1973); and M. F. D. Young, Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education (London: Collier Macmillan, 1971).

<sup>23</sup>See Rodman B. Webb's Schooling and Society (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1981). In a section entitled "Making Do" (pp. 230-237), Webb offers many excellent examples of specific strategies used by students as they learn to "play the game."

<sup>24</sup>An obvious exception to this generalization is the so-called "free school movement." Many varied, and possibly worthwhile, school change experiments have taken place within this "movement." However, for reasons concerning both structure and rhetoric these experiments are irrelevant to the primary concern of this work, i.e., change within the educational establishment.

Structurally, these experiments have set themselves up as private schooling alternatives, based on the belief that it is impossible to change education as a social institution. Ivan Illich, in a 1971 article entitled "The Alternative to Schooling" (New York Saturday Review, June 19, 1971), wrote,

"in order to see clearly the alternatives we face, we must first distinguish education from schooling, which means separating the humanistic intent of the teacher from the impact of the invariant structure of the school. . . . I call it the hidden curriculum, because it constitutes the unalterable framework of the system within which all changes in the curriculum are made. (Emphasis added; the quotation appears in The Free School by W. Kenneth Richmond, London, Methuen and Co., 1973.)"

Secondly, the rhetoric continues "dichotomous alternative" type of thinking into its expression of educational aims, e.g., a concern for the individual rather than society, feelings rather than ideas, affective education rather than cognitive education, etc. I am not claiming that this rhetoric accurately reflects the thinking of the varied individuals who claim some allegiance to this movement. But given this popular perception of the aims of the free school movement, its consideration as a movement would hardly facilitate the understanding of a way of thinking which seeks to overcome these dichotomous alternatives.



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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH


I was born Maralyn Hatch in South Bend, Indiana, and became a Floridian at the age of three. In Hollywood, Florida, I got my first taste of public schooling at Dania Elementary and South Broward High. I found it relatively pleasant, but not particularly relevant to my future. Hollywood was home until 1958 when I became Maralyn Blachowicz.

As the wife of Lee Blachowicz I moved to Gainesville to help him finish his engineering degree. It was in Gainesville that it first occurred to me that I might enjoy a college education. Ten years (and two sons) later, I was divorced and a full-time philosophy student at Eckerd College (then Florida Presbyterian College) in St. Petersburg, Florida.


Things seemed to move rapidly then. In 1971, I graduated from Eckerd, and immediately started my master's degree program in counseling at the University of South Florida. I completed my M.A. in 1973, and the paid internship I was enjoying at Eckerd College became a full-time position. After two years, it was clear that I would prefer teaching, so I moved back to Gainesville and began my doctoral program.

The program has helped me to clarify my commitment and direction. At this point the specific future of Dr. Blachowicz is open, but the desired path is finally clear.

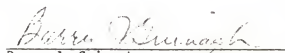
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Rodman B. Webb, Chairman  
Associate Professor of Foundations  
of Education

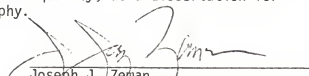
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Samuel D. Andrews  
Associate Professor of Foundations  
of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
Barry J. Guinagh  
Associate Professor of Foundations  
of Education


I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Foundations of Education in the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 1982

  
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